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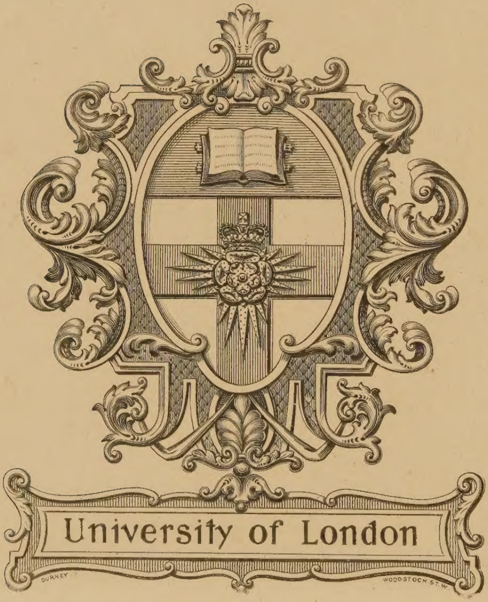
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HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

THIRD SERIES:

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF

WILLIAM IV.

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53 & 54 VICTORIÆ, 1890.

VOL. CCCXLV.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM

THE FIFTH DAY OF JUNE, 1890,

TO

THE TWENTY-FIFTH DAY OF JUNE, 1890.

Fifth Volume of the Session.

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ERRATA.

June 11. Mr. Lees Knowles, page 582, from the word "or," in line 30, to end of speech, the Report should read—

> "it will be necessary to prove *not only* that the consumption of milk from the dairy is likely to cause infectious disease to persons residing in the district, *but also* that some persons in the district are suffering from infectious disease attributable to the supply of milk from the dairy. Further, if it is proved that the milk has caused infectious disease to some person outside the district, no action can be taken by the Local Authority, although in such a case the milk should certainly not be supplied in the district."

Page 603, line 47, *alter* the one *to* Sections 31 and 32; page 606, after line 1, *insert* Police and Sanitary; page 615, line 53, *alter* Mr. Lees Knowles *to* An hon. Member.

June 20. Lord Fortescue, page 1461, line 28, *alter* thankfully *to* thanklessly.

HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

IN THE

FIFTH SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*,
APPOINTED TO MEET 5 AUGUST, 1886, IN THE FIFTIETH
YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

FIFTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1890.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 5th June, 1890.

DE WAHULL BARONY.

Petition of Constantia Elizabeth Chetwood-Aiker, of Stoke Bishop, in the County of Gloucester, widow, as heir lineal and representative of Sir Richard Chetwood, the claimant to the title in the time of Her Majesty's predecessor, King James the First, and also of the several persons her ancestors who received the accustomed summonses to Parliaments, to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to be graciously pleased, on sufficient proof of the petitioner's right and descent being made, to admit her succession, and to declare that she is of right entitled to bear the title, honour, and dignity of Baroness de Wahull in the Peerage of England, with succession to her heirs general, and also to assign to that title, honour, and dignity such precedence as Her Majesty may be graciously pleased to declare, or that Her Majesty might be graciously pleased to make such other order or to give such directions in the premises as to Her Majesty might seem meet, together with Her Majesty's reference thereof to this House and the report of the Attorney General thereon thereunto annexed: Presented (by command), read, and referred to the Committee for Privileges to consider and report.

The Lord Reay—Took the Oath.

SAT FIRST.

The Earl of Craven, after the death of his father.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 57.)

Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Standing Orders Nos. XXXIX. and XLV. considered (according to Order) and dispensed with for this day's sitting.

CUSTODY OF CHILDREN BILL.
(NO. 98.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, this Bill consists of but a single clause, and I do not think anyone who takes an interest in the subject will say that it goes too far. It provides that where the parent or guardian of a child applies to the High Court, or the Court of Session, for a writ or order for the production of the child, and the Court is of opinion that the parent or guardian has so conducted himself that the Court should refuse to enforce his right to the custody of the child, the Court may, in its discretion, decline to issue the writ or make the order. Your Lordships will remember that when my noble Friend the Earl of Meath introduced a Bill on the subject I considered it was my duty to point out certain objections to it, and that Bill was ultimately withdrawn. Another Bill has been introduced by my noble Friend, which I must say seems to me to be free in a great measure from those objections; but I am not at all certain that even in its present form there may not be objections to some of its clauses. I believe great mischief has been done, and is constantly being done, by persons being permitted to exercise the important functions of parents very much to the injury of their children; but, at the same time, while recognising that a measure of this kind is desirable, it is necessary to be careful not to go too far in the direction of substituting other control for that of parents, or cutting down or in any way seriously affecting parental rights. One may very readily be tempted to go much too far when influenced by feelings such as are not unnaturally raised by incidents of the kind we have heard of. I am sorry to say that many other such instances have since been called to my attention. Still, when I ask your Lordships to read this Bill a second time, I do not propose to make it in any way a rival to the Bill which my noble Friend has upon the Paper, and which, I understand, he intends to bring forward. On the contrary, I would suggest that both Bills should be referred to the same Committee; and, if with proper security for preserving parental rights, additional security can be given in the interests of the children, I should be very glad indeed to concur with the noble Lord as to some form in which such additional protection can be given. At the same time, I think we are all agreed that the subject is one which demands legislation, and the Bill which I now propose is for the purpose of giving additional security to children by giving further powers to the Courts, which, except in certain instances, have not thought themselves authorised to withhold children from their parents' custody. I think it may be very fitly discussed in Committee, and I will only now ask your Lordships to read the Bill a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a}."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

LORD THRING: The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack has given so much encouragement to the Bill which stands in the name of my noble Friend Lord Meath, that I will make very few observations upon this measure. The Bill which the noble and learned Lord proposes adds, in my judgment, and, I think, also in your Lordships' judgment, very little to the existing powers of the law. What is really required is that poor children should have the same benefit before the law as the children of the rich possess at present. It has, I believe, been decided by the Court of Chancery that a parent who has misconducted himself cannot demand to have the custody of his children given back to him. Again, it has been decided that a parent who misconducts himself can have his children taken away from him. That was done in the famous Shelley case. The Court of Chancery, therefore, protects rich children when parents who have misconducted themselves want to resume the custody of their children, and it also takes away from them that custody when, in the judgment of the Court, they do not deserve to have it. Then there was also the case, to which I pray the attention of the Lord Chancellor, of "Lyon *v.* Blakey," in which, I think, Lord Eldon decided that an aunt who had brought up two or three young ladies, and intended to provide for them, should retain the control of them. He refused to give back those children to the custody of the father, on the ground that the father had really and truly relinquished their custody. Those are suggestions which I trust the noble and learned Lord will see are desired to be embodied in Lord Meath's Bill, or in some other measure which may be approved of in Committee. The proposition is that where a father in poor circumstances practically relinquishes the custody of his children by acquiescing in their being brought up by somebody else, the children of a poor person should have the same protection as the Court of Chancery would give in the case of children of richer parents. Then with regard to the question of the father's misconduct, the noble and learned Lord is, of course, quite aware that it is utterly impossible to prove misconduct is many cases, for the simple reason that the child has been picked up as a waif and taken charge of, or else the child may have been handed over by a father or mother who has disappeared. Such parents will sometimes go away for years, and my noble Friend will, I believe, be able to give numerous examples where that has occurred. They then return at the critical moment of the child's existence, and demand that he shall be handed over to them, if a girl, for the vilest purposes, and if a boy, for the purpose of getting the benefit of his labour. I think those propositions, therefore, should be embodied in some formal way, so as to provide that where a parent relinquishes the custody of his child, he should, before he is allowed to resume possession of it, be obliged first of all to show that he deserves to have the custody by paying such a sum as the Court shall think fit and proper to the foster parent for its maintenance; but, above all, if he relinquishes the custody of his child, he should be called upon to prove that he is worthy to have the child given back to him, that he is able to properly maintain and educate it, and that it would be more for the child's benefit that it should go back to the father than that it should remain with the foster parent. I quite agree with what the noble and learned Lord has said with respect to the absolute right which the parent has at Common Law, but I would submit to your Lordships that the real consideration is what is for the benefit of the child, not what is for the benefit of the parent in this matter. In considering what is best to be done, we must consider what is best in the interests of the children, and this appears to me to be one of the most urgent matters which your Lordships can have to consider. I believe there is no cruelty equal to the cruelty, in many cases, of rending poor children from their foster parents, and handing them back to their natural guardians.

LORD EMLY: My Lords, I, of course, entirely agree with what my noble and learned Friend has just said, and with what the Lord Chancellor has said with regard to the importance of legislating upon this subject; but I would venture to suggest to my noble Friend that without some important Amendments very injurious effects may be produced by a measure of this kind. It might be used for very dangerous purposes. Take the case—a very common one—of a wretched, half-starving mother, who, stifling her conscience, sells her child to a proselytising society. In a little time her conscience pricks her, and, stung by compunction, she tries to recover him. If she had so conducted herself that the Court did not think her fit to have his custody, although some other institution conducted on the principles of her own religion might be ready to take charge of him, she is under this Bill to be refused redress, and unless she can show that she is herself a proper person to have the custody of the child she could not get him away. I submit to your Lordships that, if I am correct in my interpretation, some Amendment should be made to meet the difficulty which at present might arise. Because, observe what happens. The law would be giving its sanction to the making of an immoral contract. I am sure that every one of your Lordships will agree with me that to induce persons by bribery to violate their consciences, whatever religion they may belong to, or whatever religious views they may hold, is to strike at the very foundation of natural morality, and any measure which would lead to that result your Lordships would, I am sure, be unwilling to pass. But I will now take a stronger case. Take the case of a child whose father is dead. By the law that child is bound to be brought up in the father's religion; but by this Bill, if unamended, should there be misconduct on the part of the mother surviving, the Court would have to decide that the child should be placed in an institution where a religion totally different from that of the father was taught. I, of course, entirely acquit the noble and learned Lord of any intention to give a charter to proselytism, but I submit to him that in those particulars the Bill requires amendment. I have no doubt that he will be far better able than I to suggest some way of meeting these difficulties. It appears to me there are two very obvious ways of doing it. One would be that the Bill shall only apply to the case of recognised and legal institutions; and the other that the Court shall have power, in cases where it thought fit not to order the child to be returned to the parent, to place him in an institution in which, having reference to the religion of the parent, it would be proper he should be placed. I will venture to make one other observation, and that is that among those Amendments I trust there will be one requiring that in all cases the alleged misconduct of parents or guardians, or their competency to have charge of the child, should always be inquired into in open Court.

*The Bishop of CARLISLE: My Lords, before this Bill is read a second time I desire to say a few words on the general subject. If I may be permitted to say so, I approve of the Second Reading, and I am glad the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack has stated that there is really no intention of offering opposition to the other Bill which is to be brought before us by the noble Earl on the other side of the House. I will express no opinion on the Bill which has been presented by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, but I would venture to say that if we pass that alone we shall only have touched the fringe of a very important subject. The Bill that is to come on afterwards has been aptly described as one for the better "protection of children," while that presented by the noble and learned Lord has reference only to the "custody of children." That is, no doubt, a very important matter; but looking at the subject from the noble Lord's point of view, the consideration of what is best for the children themselves rather than what are the legal rights of parents, is the most wholesome point of view from which to regard it. Cases of this kind have been brought under my notice. A boy has, for instance, been put into a public institution, and has been there taken great care of. The father and mother are, I will not say extremely depraved persons, but extremely careless persons, in whose house the child would get no good and they very rightly acquiesce in the provision that has been made for him. He remains there for a certain time, and then when the parents find that he has been taught to read and write—better taught than they had any right to expect—they make the base calculation that they can turn the boy to good account, and they go to the institution and apply to have the boy given up to them in order that they may make use of him for purposes of mendicity of various kinds. It is clear that to give way and recognise the legal right of parents of that kind would be really to sacrifice the best interests of the children; and that if you could only look to the best interests of children you would refuse to hand them over to such parents, and would continue the child at the institution in which the parents had assented to its being placed. That is the kind of case which presses upon my mind, and that is the kind of case which it appears to me will be met by the Bill of my noble Friend opposite. While I do not doubt the wisdom of the Bill of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, I do supremely rejoice that it is not to go by itself before the Committee, but that it will probably go *pari passu* with the other Bill. I hope they will be considered by the same Committee so that we may have the benefit of both these Bills.

The LORD CHANCELLOR: I would propose that this Bill be committed to the General Committee. Although it does touch upon questions of law it deals with the general subject, and may, therefore, very well be dealt with by the Committee.

On Question, agreed to.

Bill read 2^a (according to order), and committed to the Standing Committee for General Bills.

COURT OF CHANCERY OF LANCASTER BILL.—(No. 93.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

The LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, this Bill is, I believe, identical in most of its provisions with a Bill which was proposed by the noble Lord opposite in 1883. It is practically to give greater facilities for the performance of the work of the Court of

Chancery in the County Palatine. The matter to Liverpool, Manchester, and, indeed, the whole of Lancashire is, of course, extremely important. There are a great number of places in regard to which it is very desirable to give facilities for the trial of cases in the County Palatine, and it is the object of this Bill to remove the difficulties at present standing in the way. My Lords, I have stated the substance of the Bill, and I move that it be read a second time.

Bill read 2ª (according to order), and committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

OFFENCES COMMITTED ABROAD BILL.—(No. 94.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

The LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, this is a Bill which, for many reasons, has been proved to be urgently needed. One very important feature of the Bill is this: Where persons are guilty of an offence by reason of receiving goods known to be stolen, that offence is known in this country as felony. There is no such thing in other countries as felony; and the result is that where the offence has been committed abroad which would constitute a felony if done in this country, it is not felony, having taken place abroad. Therefore, the receiving of goods knowing them to have been stolen is one which cannot, in proper language, be so described if the goods have been received knowing them to have been stolen abroad. That is one of the classes of offences with which the Bill proposes to deal, and I believe it will be found to be one which can best be made effective by discussion in Committee, in order to see whether the proper technical phraseology is adopted. I hope that will be done in Committee in a way which will enable your Lordships to see that the Bill deals effectually with a matter which is of importance.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

Lord THRING: My Lords, this Bill is a most important one, and it will, in almost every sentence and line of it, require severe scrutiny. I only trust that the noble and learned Lord, in pity for the limited intelligence bestowed on the human mind, will have a Memorandum prepared regarding it for presentation to the Committee. This Bill affects many statutes, including the Fugitive Offenders' Act, and the Acts referring to jurisdiction abroad. I would submit to the noble and learned Lord that without some Memorandum or summary of the Acts to which it relates, it would hardly be possible for any Committee to grope through its mazes. I would also suggest, with great respect to the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, that Section 4 of the Bill should be re-drawn, for, as it stands at present, I defy any human intelligence to understand its meaning.

Lord HERSCHELL: My Lords, the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, in giving an account of the scope of his Bill, has dealt with only a very small portion of it. The provision of which he spoke is one of a very desirable character, and I should imagine that nobody could seriously object to it. It makes a change in the law which, in my opinion, is very necessary, because the law in that respect has always seemed to me to be somewhat absurd. But the Bill is of a wider scope than would have appeared from the speech of my noble and learned Friend, because it deals very largely with the power of arrest and trial of persons who commit offences out of Her Majesty's dominions, and not within the realm of any civilised State; and it provides practically for their trial in any part of Her Majesty's dominions. Very large powers of arrest are given, and they may be exercised not only by British, but by foreign officials. It seems to me that those provisions require the very closest scrutiny, because I can conceive various cases arising which, under the Bill as it now stands, would be likely to create considerable diplomatic difficulties with Foreign Powers. The arrest of a person by the authority of the Government of a country outside its own dominions must obviously always be a matter of very considerable delicacy. We should be effecting that arrest in a place where our laws do not prevail and where Her Majesty's Government and officials have no authority; and the power that is given here to authorise the arrest under such circumstances, not only by British officials but by foreign officials, of any person accused of a crime of this character might, it seems to me, give rise to difficulties of a very serious character; because, of course, a person being accused (at least I presume so) of a crime as mentioned in the 5th section, 1st sub-section, for which he can be tried under this Act, means accused by any person who may choose to make such accusation; it cannot mean accused in any official or authoritative manner, because no official authority exists in the place where the crime is supposed to have been committed. But one can conceive that, under such circumstances, the question of a crime committed by a person found outside Her Majesty's dominions which would lead to his arrest by an officer of a Foreign State might obviously give rise to some very awkward questions indeed. I am not calling attention to these matters in any spirit of hostility to the Bill. I can quite understand the difficulties which arise when British subjects commit offences outside the territory of any civilised Power, and I entirely sympathise with the desire expressed of bringing them to justice, the more especially as they very often do great mischief to the country of which they are unworthy subjects. But I mention those matters for the purpose of calling attention to the important character of the Bill and the extreme care and attention which will have to be devoted to the consideration of all its details, as well as the close scrutiny which will be necessary into the effect of its provisions before it can be allowed to pass into law.

*THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): I am sure your Lordships will sympathise with the noble Lord who has just sat down when he says that a Bill of this kind needs careful scrutiny. No doubt some of its provisions are, to a certain extent, novel, and deal with very difficult subjects, but I think they deal with a growing evil. If we had only to deal with countries with which we are able to conclude Extradition Treaties—with civilised countries of that character where we could use sufficient influence—there would be less difficulty and less need for a Bill of this kind; but the House is well aware that in recent times a new sort of dominion has been slowly growing which is expressed in a great variety of ways. Sometimes it is called a Protectorate, sometimes a sphere of influence, sometimes a region in which another Power has interests, and so on; but without some authority of this kind there is no doubt that persons of unruly spirits, who are to be found on the outskirts of civilisation, may do a great deal of mischief and cause a great deal of trouble, and there may be no means of bringing them to justice. That is, I think, the motive which has induced the production of this clause. I quite admit the great difficulties which attend the question; but I want to press upon the noble and learned Lord and upon the noble Lord behind me that they are not difficulties of our seeking; they are not difficulties even which have arisen from previous complications; but they are difficulties which have arisen out of the curious conditions of International relations which have from time to time grown up. The point in which I am—I will not say most interested, but which interests me very much—is the trial of British subjects in this country for offences committed abroad. With most civilised States we have Extradition Treaties, and most of them allow us to extradite our own subjects to be tried for offences committed abroad. On the surface that seems a reasonable arrangement; but when you come practically to work it, you are asked to send your own subjects for trial to a place where you cannot reasonably have any conviction that the trial will be conducted according to any principle which, in this country, we have been accustomed to consider inseparable from justice. It would be invidious to suggest instances where such differences exist; but in some there is a great delay in dealing with prisoners, and in others great corruption is found, considerations which make it very desirable that we should, as far as possible, try our own subjects in this country for any crimes they may have committed abroad.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I must apologise to your Lordships for having referred in a somewhat perfunctory manner to the provisions of the Bill, but I thought its details would be best dealt with in Committee. That was the reason why I made but short reference to it. I gave one example only of some of the difficulties which might arise when you are dealing with questions involving the consideration of foreign law, but I quite agree with my noble and learned Friend that it is a matter which must be very carefully looked into in Committee. For that reason it appeared to me there was no great necessity for any considerable amount of explanation at this stage. I would suggest that the Bill should be referred to the Grand Committee on Law.

Bill read 2ª (according to order), and committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN BILL.—(No. 68.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

*THE EARL OF MEATH: My Lords, I desire, in the first place, to return my thanks to the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack for having brought forward a Bill dealing with the custody of children, and that having found it necessary on a former occasion to oppose the Bill which I brought forward for the adoption of children, he had the frankness to acknowledge that there were grievances to be redressed. Quite unexpectedly by me he has responded to the appeal which I made to him upon that occasion that he should bring forward, on the part of the Government, some measure which would protect the children. I therefore return him my most sincere thanks for having done so; and I have also to thank him for having permitted me to bring forward a second time this Bill for the Protection of Children. It would have been quite in his power to prevent this Bill being brought forward; he has not only done that, but he has informed your Lordships as I understand that he will allow it to be read a second time and referred to the Committee before which his own measure will go. I hope some legislation may result therefrom, which will remove these poor children from the risk of ill-treatment and the sufferings which they undergo when, after, perhaps, many years of kind attention and care, they are claimed by brutal and unworthy parents who demand as a legal right that the children shall be handed over to them. The Bill which I ask your Lordships now to read a second time has been framed with the view of avoiding the contentious subject of adoption, and yet, at the same time, of protecting from the abuse of parental authority children over whom their parents have relinquished control. Your Lordships will notice that all those contentious questions have been avoided which raised debate upon the occasion of my former Bill being presented. I then produced some 30 cases in which children had been taken away from happy homes by their parents, just at the age when they could be made of use to them, regardless of the children's interests, and I showed that in a great number of those cases the children had relapsed into misery and crime. Since that time I have received a number of letters from persons who are interested in this question, and there are one or two of the cases mentioned there to which, if your Lordships will allow me, I will call attention. There was a case which has been brought to my notice in which a child was taken into a home and supported for several years. The mother died of a broken heart from the cruel treatment of her husband. He was a hopeless drunkard, and, though he had been well-educated, and was formerly in a good position, he had lost everything through drink, and was, in fact, living on the charity of his neighbours. When the child, a girl, was seven years old, the father came to the home to remove her.

> "I found," says the lady who writes to me, "that the father had several people outside; having taken legal advice, I found that we could not resist the father's claim, and that we could not prevent him exercising his rights, though he had no lodgings to which he could take the child, and that she would be exposed to all kinds of evil, religious and moral."

That is a case, my Lords, which I point out as a very good example of the instances which have been sent me. There is one more, however, to which I will refer. A man was sentenced to five years' penal servitude for burglary. His two infants were taken into the home. The wife was also a drunkard and was convicted of crime. When they were released from prison their first act was to demand their children, both of whom were almost dead of starvation when they were admitted. Those who had taken care of and maintained the children had no power to keep them, however wicked or depraved the parents were, and they had to be given up. There are a number of such cases, but I am not going to inflict them upon your Lordships. I think I have read enough in conjunction with the cases I read on the previous occasion to show that there is really a necessity for some legislation of this character. In fact, it was acknowledged by all the noble Lords who spoke upon the last occasion, and it is generally admitted that there is great need for legislation which does not improperly interfere with the exercise of parental authority, to prevent cases of hardship and of injury to children where they have been deserted and brought up by persons other than their parents. The Bill is intended to prevent the abuse of parental authority, and it is a very short one. By the 1st section it provides that where a parent has relinquished his control over his child, and such child has been maintained by others out of private funds in a proper manner, the parent shall not be entitled to resume the custody or control of such child until he has repaid to such person or persons all costs properly incurred by such person or persons in bringing up such child. The parent, however, though he may be willing to repay the costs incurred in bringing up the child, shall not be entitled to resume custody of it unless the Court shall be of opinion that it is for the child's benefit he should do so. The Bill, however, gives power to the Court before which the case comes to waive such repayments in such cases as it may think fit. As has been said by the noble and learned Lord behind me, I think there can be no question but that in these days public opinion and feeling is more acute than in former times with regard to the way in which children are treated, and in accordance with that general feeling I do not think it is right that the law should consider the benefit of the children as subordinate to the interests of the parents. By Section 2, a foster parent may be similarly protected in reference to payments by Poor Law Guardians. Section 3 simply gives a definition of the meaning of the words "parent" and "child." Then Section 4 provides that—

> "For the purposes of this Act a parent shall be deemed to have relinquished the control of his child if he has abandoned or deserted his child; or has been guilty of such misconduct as would, according to the law for the time being in force as administered by a Court of Equity, disentitle him to the custody of his child; or if he, knowing that his child is being brought up by a foster parent, has not taken any proceedings to resume the custody of such child for so long a time or under such circumstances as, in the opinion of the Court having cognisance of the case, to indicate that the parent has acquiesced in the bringing up of such child by the foster parent."

If I might be permitted at this stage, as I did not speak on the occasion of the Lord Chancellor's Bill being brought forward, I would ask a question which I think the noble and learned Lord might desire to answer, and that is, What is the actual law on the subject at present? Speaking as a layman, I cannot find out what the law actually is upon which Magistrates act at present. It appears that when children are claimed by parents under these circumstances the Magistrates either refuse to interfere altogether or they grant a summons, and the child is obliged to be handed back to the parents. In the Bill which has been laid upon the Table of your Lordships' House only those cases are mentioned where the matter has been brought to the cognisance of the High Court; but, as far as I can make out, such matters are not brought to the cognisance of the High Court at all. I should like, as a layman, to know what would be the course which persons having the custody of a child should take if they thought they were justified, under the Bill of the noble and learned Lord, in retaining the child. Of late years, my Lords, much attention has been drawn to this subject, and it is being more and more recognised that the interests of the child ought to be regarded as paramount where they clash with the old Common Law rights of the parent. By my Bill all complications from changes in the law by the transference of authority to persons other than parents, or in regard to the law of devolution of property, are avoided. There can be no fear of its encouraging or permitting the sale of children, or of proselytising, as the parents can always, on paying the costs which have been incurred, resume possession or control of children, and even if they are too poor to pay those costs, the Court can give possession of the children without payment, if it considers it would be right from any cause that the parents should resume possession of the children. I hope your Lordships will permit this Bill to be read a second time, and that you will think it right that it should be referred to the same Committee to which the noble and learned Lord's Bill has been referred, in order that the two measures may be considered together. There is, in my opinion, no question that the handing back of these children to their parents is, as a general rule, very adverse to the interests of children themselves. A gentleman who has for years been at the head of an institution for the reception of lads reclaimed from the streets writes to me that he has gone through the brief history of the boys who have been received into that institution for the last two and a half years, and he finds that of the whole number about one in eight has been injured by the parents coming and claiming them as soon as the boys have been taught a little, and are able to be employed as errand boys; so that in about 12·5 of the cases in which their funds and labours have been expended in the work of rescuing such children from ruin their efforts have been thrown away. A lady who has the care of girls writes to me in a similar way. She says that the proportion of relapses into crime among children when returned to their parents equals 16·9 per cent., as against ·6 in the cases where they have not been returned to their parents; and that in the Felton School 23 per cent. of the children returned to their parents are re-convicted, as against 5 per cent. of those who are otherwise provided for. I will not detain your Lordships any further. The discussion upon this subject has practically been going on now for some time, and I think, therefore, your Lordships are all more or less in possession of the facts of the case. I only ask your Lordships to permit the Bill to be read a second time, and to refer it to the same Committee as that which will consider the Bill of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."

Lord HERSCHELL: My Lords, I should desire to make a few observations to the House upon this Bill, and particularly with reference to its bearing upon the Bill of my noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack, which has been read a second time. I am very glad they are both to go to the Standing Committee, because I cannot help feeling that some measure of protection for children is necessary beyond that which would be afforded by the provisions contained in my noble and learned Friend's Bill. It would be necessary, in order to prevent the parent obtaining possession of his child under the measure proposed by my noble and learned Friend, for the person seeking to withhold the child from its parent to prove that such parent had been guilty of some misconduct, and that he or she was unfit to have the care and custody of the child. Now it is, of course, obvious that the difficulty of bringing forward such proof would often be immense, and in many cases it might be impossible to bring forward evidence to support such an allegation. I do not think where a parent has relinquished the control of his child to others who have cared for it, brought it up, and expended money upon it, that he can reasonably be allowed to assert a right to resume possession of his child without first restoring to those persons the money they have so expended. But I do not think it would do to make that a condition absolute in all cases, because there may be cases where a parent can prove that he is perfectly fit to have the possession of his child, that he can afford to properly maintain it, and that he can provide for it a happy home, that he is not in any way to blame, and that his circumstances are such that it would be absolutely debarring him of the custody of his child altogether if he were compelled to pay those expenses before the child could be handed over to him. Therefore, I think my noble and learned Friend has wisely left to the Court the determination of the question whether the parent should first be compelled to pay the whole, or some portion, or none at all, of those expenses, at the same time enabling the Court, if it should think fit to do so, to enforce payment of those expenses before the child is delivered up. That would, of course, throw upon the parent the onus of showing that he was fit to be allowed to take back the child, and that the child's interests could be safely entrusted to him. It seems to me there is all the difference in the world between that onus being thrown upon the parent and casting upon the person who has taken care of the child and brought it up the burden of proving that the parent has disentitled himself to the custody. I quite agree in what has been said by a noble Lord that there has hitherto been too great a regard for what is called the sanctity of the parental authority, even after parents have violated every duty which they can owe to the children to whom they have given birth. It seems to me there has been too little regard paid to the interests and welfare of the children. It is certainly terrible to reflect how often it has been the case, and may be still, that a child who has found the lack of parental care supplied by those who have taken the place of real parents to it, who have done for the child, and well done for it, all that parents ought to do for a child, has been torn from those foster-parents at a time when it has learned to love them and feel grateful to them, as to those to whom alone its gratitude is due, to be handed over to parents in name only, who can afford it no proper education or maintenance, and who have shown themselves—himself, or herself—utterly unfit to train it for its future life. I agree, at the same time, that we are not lightly to regard the relation of parent and child, and that we ought not lightly to set aside the right which the parent has hitherto had in law to the custody of his child. But it appears to me that that right is fully guarded in the Bill which my noble and learned Friend has proposed, because the provisions of the Bill are only to operate where the parent has relinquished the control over his child to other persons who have brought it up. The parent is only in that case to be regarded as having abandoned or deserted it. Surely if a parent has abandoned or deserted his child, and left the duty of its care to others, it is only reasonable that the Court should have power to require him to repay what those others had spent, and to inquire whether it would be good for the child to remain where it is rather than that it should go back to the parent who has deserted it. With regard to the question of misconduct, the Court of Equity will interfere with the exercise of the parental right to custody in proper cases and upon sufficient evidence, and this Bill would apply that principle equally in cases of the kind I have been describing. Another category to which the observation might be applied is that class of cases where the parent knowing that the child is being so brought up has refrained for so long a time from making application for the custody of his child that he may be taken to have really acquiesced in its being so brought up. In none of the cases is the barrier to the parents resuming the custody made absolute, but the matter is left in the discretion of the Court, which must be satisfied that it will be for the child's interest before the parent can be permitted to resume possession of it. I submit to your Lordships that that is a provision which is eminently reasonable. With regard to the observations which have been made by Lord Emly, I certainly should feel very much regret if any measure of this kind should be taken advantage of for the purposes of proselytising in reference to the children, and I do not think there would be any real difficulty in providing against it, if it were thought to be at all possible. Where the parent himself or herself is shown to be unfit to have the custody of the child, I think if it was proved to the satisfaction of the Court that a child was being brought up in an institution where the religious teaching was other than that its parents accepted, and that there was some other institution the religious teaching in which was in accordance with their views, and where the child would be equally well-cared for, there could be no objection to giving power to the Court to transfer the child from one institution to the other. But that is a matter which would require consideration. There seems to me to be no insuperable difficulty in striking against the danger which the noble Lord has suggested. I trust that the result of the consideration of these two measures combined may be one measure which will afford better protection to children, and secure them against many of the hardships they have now to undergo.

*EARL PERCY: I am sure your Lordships will agree with the last remark of the noble and learned Lord Lord Herschell in hoping that the issue of sending these two Bills to the same Committee may be the production of a measure which will strengthen the hands of the law in dealing with the very hard cases which have been referred to. To my non-legal mind this seems a matter of the greatest difficulty to deal with. We all seem to know generally what we want; but if we can judge from the measures which have been successively laid before us we do not quite see how to meet the requirements of the case. The first Bill on the subject which my noble Friend Lord Meath presented to your Lordships' House was generally understood to go too far. The noble Lord has now presented another Bill which we have before us. That measure was stopped in its progress by the notice which the noble and learned Lord gave that he proposed to bring forward a measure on behalf of the Government. I presume from the fact of that measure having been brought forward that the Government is of opinion that Lord Meath's Bill is not absolutely necessary, and that, at any rate, the provisions which it embodies are not altogether needed, because otherwise the Government measure would have been more exhaustive. But, my Lords, if it be the case that we require some further legislation than that embodied in the Lord Chancellor's Bill, I do not doubt that it would be of great importance if, before we go into Committee, the noble and learned Lord and the noble Lord who has introduced this Bill would consider what the best means would be of meeting the difficulties which have been mentioned with regard to this species of legislation altogether. I should like to say a few words here with regard to the first clause, which provides for cases where a parent has relinquished the control over his child, and certain provisions follow. One of the instances by which the noble Lord sought to support this Bill was a case in which the parents of the child had suffered a lengthened term of imprisonment, and he asked your Lordships whether it was not a very improper thing that the child should have been returned to parents after they had come out of prison under such circumstances. That, I think, would depend entirely upon the circumstances of the particular case; but as far as any objection on that account goes, there is nothing, as far as I can see, in this Bill which makes the imprisonment of the parents tantamount to the relinquishment by them of control over their children. We ought, I think, clearly to understand what it is intended that this legislation should do. I am strengthened in that remark by the words which occur at the end of the clause—

> "If the Court having cognisance of the case is of opinion that it is not for the benefit of the child that he should be brought up by the parent instead of the foster-parent."

That is going rather far I think. What does "the benefit of the child" mean? To put an extreme case: suppose the foster-parent is likely to leave the child a large fortune, and the natural parent is not so happily circumstanced; is the Court to decide that it is not for the benefit of the child under those circumstances that he should be restored to his natural parent? It is impossible, I think, that my noble Friend can mean that. Unless something is introduced to make that a little plainer, I think it may lead to very great difficulty. Then the noble Earl has said that it would be right the Court should consider what is for the benefit of the child, rather than what is for the interest of the parent in the matter, and other noble Lords used the same language. It is not simply a question, I beg leave to say, of whether it is for the benefit of the child that it should be restored to its parent, or left in his custody. The assumption of the law, so far as I understand it, is that parents were by nature intended to have the control of their children; that that control is proper for the child, *à priori*, and that it is only where it is clearly proved that the child would suffer morally or physically by being left to its parents that he can be taken from their custody by the State. The benefit to the child is not the question; the question is, whether there is not a natural right existing in the parent, which only the strongest reasons can justify us in depriving him of. I confess I think the Committee will find some difficulty in welding these two measures into one; but I am very glad that the matter has been brought forward, and that your Lordships' attention has been called to it; and I trust that the labours of the Committee upon the Bills will bear good fruit.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, there are a few additional remarks which I wish to make upon the present Bill. I think that some of the observations which the noble Earl has made are very material; but it seems to me that they would rather require discussion in Committee, and not to be discussed now, in dealing with the principle of the measure, because they are matters which, as it appears to me, can only be dealt with by detailed machinery. Let me take the most obvious suggestion with regard to the condition precedent to acceding to the demand of the parent that his child should be given back to him, that all monies paid on the child's behalf for its maintenance and education should be paid. I confess I regard that provision with exceeding jealousy; it looks to me very much like giving a sort of lien upon the child. It was not with that object at all that it has been put into the Bill. The object is to interpose a barrier against the demand of an unworthy parent to re-take possession of his child. I cannot doubt that that is the real object, because, regarding it merely as a matter of repayment, no one would suppose that the charitable institution or private person who has taken care of and brought up the child would willingly give him up upon being repaid the money which had been expended upon him. But if the real object is to impose a barrier to the resuming of possession by unworthy parents would it not be better to put that provision into the Bill, that an unworthy parent is not to be allowed to exercise that parental right which the Common Law gives him? Then I quite admit that, unless you make some provision with regard to the onus of proof, it may be very hard upon the charitable person or institution that they should be called upon to submit to the child being taken away by the parent, unless they could give actual proof of the parents' misconduct when the parent who had disappeared re-appeared to claim him. There would, however, be no difficulty in changing the onus of showing misconduct; and if a child has been so deserted, and the parents have left it to the care of others, it would certainly not be unreasonable to provide that, before the child should be allowed to be restored to him, the parent should show what was the reason of the desertion, how the child came to be abandoned, and that he or she is now in a position to resume possession of the child, and to take back again the parental control which they had voluntarily abandoned. And so with regard to the observations which have been made by the noble Earl who has just sat down. Unless some provision is made with reference to the principle on which the Court is to act where you have such words as "for the interest of the child," it seems to me that the Legislature will be abandoning its duty and throwing it upon the Judges without affording any guide to them in dealing with the very difficult problem which they have to solve. I think it ought to be explained in the Bill that what is meant by the expression "interest of the child" is not merely its pecuniary interest, but its moral and religious interests. Then, the moment you mention the religious interest, it is obvious that you raise a question which my noble Friend pointed out was one of the sources of danger in attempting legislation upon this subject. All I can say is, that I will listen with very great attention to any suggestions which may be made upon the clauses of the Bill to which reference has been made by noble Lords; and if the Bill can be so moulded, following the principles which it embodies, as to give effect to what is desired, as far as I am concerned I shall have very great pleasure in giving my assistance. One point more with regard to the duties which the Magistrates have to discharge. I confess I should regard with very great jealousy any proposal to submit questions of such importance and difficulty as those now under consideration to any other tribunal than the High Court. I certainly would not be a party to referring them to any other tribunal. Questions of this character affecting the relations between parent and child ought not to be remitted to Petty Sessions or Courts of inferior jurisdiction. If any such proposal were made, I am afraid I should be found on the opposite side. With the general objects of the noble Lord I am in hearty agreement. We are endeavouring to reach the same goal. The only question is as to the mode in which that is to be done, and if the two Bills can be welded together satisfactorily I shall be very glad.

Bill read 2ª (according to order), and committed to the Standing Committee for General Bills.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; then Standing Orders Nos. XXXIX. and XLV. having been dispensed with, moved that the Bill be now read 2ª; agreed to; Bill read 2ª accordingly; Committee negatived; Bill read 3ª, and passed.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) PLEURO-PNEUMONIA BILL.—(No. 105.)

DEEDS OF ARRANGEMENT BILL.—(No. 106.)

WORKING CLASSES DWELLINGS BILL.—(No. 107.)

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª, and to be printed.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Six o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter-past Four o'clock.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 5th June, 1890.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

CHANNEL TUNNEL (EXPERIMENTAL WORKS) BILL.—(*by Order.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

*(3.10.) SIR E. WATKIN (Hythe): I rise for the purpose of moving the Second Reading of this Bill, and I propose to do so with the utmost brevity. I think that the general question of the construction of the Channel Tunnel has now been reduced to certain principles on which it is not necessary to detain the House save in outline; and I believe I shall be able to show, in a few words, that the Bill has been drawn with a view to meet as far as possible the views—I was almost going to say the prejudices—of the Government. The Bill proposes simply to continue certain experiments which have been conducted with no inconsiderable success, and then to give to the Government for the time being the power of saying, should those experiments prove to be complete, whether the Tunnel should be made or not. The whole of the question of the Channel Tunnel is by that means taken out of the sphere of private enterprise, and the responsibility is placed on the shoulders of the Government of saying whether a work of this kind should be carried out in the interests of the public at large or not. For my part, I have always declared my opinion that an extension of the Empire such as the Tunnel would involve ought to be the property of the people of this country, and ought not to be regulated by a Joint Stock Company, who may be Englishmen one day, Frenchmen another, and American or anybody else afterwards. But as the Governments of both political Parties have stated that they were in favour of the construction of the Tunnel, but that it ought to be constructed by private enterprise, private enterprise has gallantly stepped in and offered to do the work and to supply the means of carrying it out. So far, every bit of the experimental work has been initiated under the eye, if not under the sanction and approval, of the Board of Trade, and I, for one, think it would be idle for any combination of men desirous of performing the work to run their heads against the Government of the day, whether the views of the Government are right or wrong. If the promoters of this scheme have a grievance, it is that if they were making a proposal against the interests and liberty of the country, they ought to have been stopped at once and prevented from expending their money fruitlessly; but they were deliberately encouraged to go on, and were told by the President of the Board of Trade of the day that the Government approved of the work. The experiments, so far as they have been made, have shown that the work can be done easily, cheaply, and rapidly. The promoters contend that uninterrupted communication between the 17,000 miles of railway in this country and the 120,000 miles of
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railway of the same gauge on the Continent would tend largely to facilitate the interchange of persons and commodities between our country and the various countries of Europe and Asia, and would be of vast benefit to industry, and of equal, if not greater, benefit to commerce. Again, they contend that this country requires a second line of supply for its food and the other necessities of its existence. To be without such a second line of supply is not a safe position for a great country to be in, while it is no phantom of the imagination to believe that the larger interchange of ideas of friendship and of trade which would result from the construction of a Channel Tunnel would likewise tend to promote peace and do away with the jealousies and misunderstandings which are so often the origin of wars. They say, further, and it is a point to which I wish to draw the attention of the President of the Board of Trade, that the experimental works as far as they have gone have been carried out in obedience to pledges given to France by the Government presided over by the late Lord Beaconsfield. They believe that they are carrying out the work of that statesman. They submit that the honour of every friend of Lord Beaconsfield demands that the agreement which his Government made with the Government of the people of France should be observed and carried out. There is not the excuse that the agreement was made with the late Imperial Government of France, because it was made with the Republican Government of that country. There is, again, as the Board of Trade ought to know, a gradual isolation going on with regard to commercial and other interchanges between England and the nations of the Continent, and a greater union with regard to the whole of Europe. England, day by day, is becoming more and more isolated : while Europe, where mountain ranges have been pierced, great harbours made, and barriers broken down, is becoming, for purposes of unbroken interchange, more and more one. If the Channel Tunnel were made, only 2,000 miles of railway are required to connect England with her great dependency of India. That railway will soon be made ; and then are you prepared to say that for all time to come you will preserve a barrier of sea to thwart and hinder through an unbroken access to and from the 300,000,000 of people in Her Majesty's Indian Empire ; while every other country in Europe may send commodities right through in the same carriage? On the other side, there are the military objections. It is said that all is well. Now, I think that all is not well between England and France. I can tell the Government, if they do not know it, that there is a very deep and widespread feeling in France at the way in which the French people have been treated in this matter by this English Government. Every reasonable person in France is in favour of closer communication between the two countries. As President Grévy said to our English workmen, every one in France is in favour of closer union with England ; and if the English Government prefer a policy of separation and isolation we can only deplore it. There would be more trade, less suspicion, and England and France would be better able from time to time to stand together in all questions affecting freedom and the civilisation of mankind. Therefore, I say all is not well. Is Newfoundland well? Are Chinese and African relations well? Is it well that the commercial classes of France can charge you with the repudiation of your Convention of 1876? Then, of course, there is our old friend—the silver streak. The only advantage of being tolerably old is that one can remember things which younger men are not likely to know. In 1847 a very distinguished soldier said in respect of this silver streak—

> "You are aware that I have for years been sensible of the alteration produced in maritime warfare and operations by the application of steam to the propelling of ships. The application of steam has exposed all parts of the coast of these islands, to be approached at all times of the tide and in all seasons by vessels so propelled from all quarters. We are, in fact, assailable, and, at least, liable to insult, and to have contributions levied upon us on all parts of the coast, including the Channel Islands, although down to this time since the Norman Conquest we have never been successfully invaded."

The writer of that letter was the great Duke of Wellington, and he dated it from Strathfieldsaye in 1847. Every sensible man will, I think, agree with his Grace that steam has bridged the Channel, and that every advantage which we formerly derived from the silver streak has gone. The Duke of Wellington, although he was 76 at the time, undertook, with an additional force of 150,000 Militiamen, to make the country invulnerable. The hon. Member for Swansea (Sir H. Vivian) had told them that he was in favour of the construction of the Tunnel, provided we increased our forces. Other objectors had talked of a levy *en masse*. But if any such need would exist when the Tunnel was made, it was just as much a need now. If these are really the views of hon. Members, why do they not have the courage of their opinions and come down here with the measures they think necessary for the protection of Great Britain against everybody, under all circumstances? If they are really patriotic men, and believe that the country requires an unlimited supply of soldiers, no matter where they are to come from, they are bound to come down here and say so. But how is it that the country, notwithstanding the £35,000,000 spent annually upon the Army and Navy, is so weak; and why should this idea and apprehension of being ridden over and subjugated only just have dawned upon us? I entertain no fear of the kind; and I repeat that there is an obligation on the part of the Conservative Party to support the policy and proceedings of their great leader, Lord Beaconsfield. In November, 1874, Lord Derby, then Minister for Foreign Affairs in Lord Beaconsfield's Government, in transmitting a Despatch to the French Ambassador, expressed the opinion that—

> "It is very desirable to support any well-considered scheme, the result of which may be to increase the facilities of communication between the two countries."

That was a proposition endorsed by Lord Beaconsfield and his Government. Later. On the 24th of December in the same year, Lord Derby wrote to the French Ambassador in London stating that the Government admitted the utility of the scheme and had no objection to it provided they had no pecuniary responsibility, and generally acquiesced in the views embodied in the Report which had been forwarded by the French Ambassador. On March 18, 1875, Sir Henry Tyler, a Member of this House, Mr. Kennedy, and Mr. Watson were solemnly appointed Commissioners to negotiate a Protocol which should be the foundation of a definite Treaty between England and France. In fact, the whole principle of the wisdom and usefulness of the proposed improvement in the means of intercourse with France was acquiesced in by the Government, details only remained. They agreed to the Protocol, and signed it; the French Commissioners signed it, and when the document was laid on the Table of the House of Commons, the Government thanked the Commissioners for the able way in which they had drawn up the preliminary Memorandum for a Treaty. Then how is it that these scares come so late in the day? The whole military question was considered by these Commissioners, in consultation with the War Department at home. It was agreed that either country, of its own volition, without giving reasons, might stop the working of the Tunnel, or impede it, or destroy it entirely. It was also provided that either country might make such fortifications in connection with the construction of the Tunnel as they might think desirable. I assume the Ministers of Lord Beaconsfield agreed with Lord Beaconsfield. That noble Lord was his own shepherd, and generally kept his sheep in tolerable subjection. But who formed the Government of Lord Beaconsfield at that time? First of all there was the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, who was then Chief Secretary for Ireland. Whether his contact with ideas of Irish government made him an enemy to improved communication between England and France I do not know, but at all events the right hon. Gentleman shared the responsibility.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I was not a member of the Cabinet at the time, and had no responsibility whatever in the matter.

*SIR E. WATKIN: Then, so far, I release the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman did not know at the time, but when a week or a month afterwards he did know, surely his duty was to have gone to Lord Beaconsfield to tender his resignation. There was another Gentleman who cannot plead the same excuse, the right hon. Gentleman who acts as Leader of this House. The right hon. Gentleman was Secretary to the Treasury, and it was through his executive action that all the instructions were given to our delegates in Paris. There was also the Earl of Derby, who wrote the despatches at the Foreign Office. He, however, has not changed his views since. He held a strong opinion and he still adheres to it. Nor did he form it hurriedly, or in any nonchalent kind of way; on the contrary, it was the result of firm conviction. I do not know whether the Marquess of Salisbury was in the Cabinet at the time, but I cannot believe that Lord Beaconsfield concealed from him his views and desires in reference to a closer alliance between England and France. Among the other Ministers of Lord Beaconsfield were Lord Cadogan, the present First Lord of the Admiralty, and the Right Hon. Edward Stanhope, now, happily for the country, Minister for War. If these Gentlemen have changed their views, it is their duty to get up to-night and tell us why they have done so. Always remember that France is our best and largest customer in interchange of commodities, save only our own India. Contrast the position of France with this country in regard to communication with other parts of Europe. While the communication with England is simply and solely by sea, France has 14 separate railway communications with Belgium, eight with Germany, seven with Switzerland, two with Italy, and two with Spain, while a third is now being constructed under the highest portion of the Pyrenees. What people are asked to believe by the opponents of the tunnel is that a frontier, which would be no larger than the entrance door of this House, could not be defended by all the power of England. I do not pretend to believe that. All the House is asked to do is to permit the experiments to go on. Am I to be told, with regard to one great discovery made by the men employed in the tunnel in the time they were unoccupied for Channel purposes — namely, the discovery of coal under the Channel—that that experimental work is to stop? Are we to be compelled to allow our works, made on and under our own property, and with our own money, to fall into desuetude, and to be prevented from utilising one of the greatest discoveries of modern times? All I ask the right hon. Gentlemen is to give us fair play. Many things have happened since this question came up two years ago. Among them is the proposal of different means of crossing the Channel. There has been a proposal to bridge the Channel, a proposed combined arrangement of bridge and tunnel, the idea of a tube in Mid-Channel, suggested by the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir E. Reed), and, in addition to that, there is a proposal to render nugatory the possibility of loss, surprise, or damage, by the erection of forts designed by Mr. Heenan, C.E.—a proposal which we have been told met the objections of many eminent military men. I do not believe in forts myself, but would be prepared to accept them if they would satisfy the Military Authorities. Then there is the remarkable admission of Lord Wolseley in reference to a bridge which seems to me to make what is called the military objection vanish altogether. Under these altered circumstances I hope the Government will take a broader view of the situation. We are now simply discussing the Second Reading of the Bill, which simply means that the allegations contained in it shall be inquired into upstairs, and the whole question thoroughly ventilated, criticised, and thrashed out. I ask the House, without pronouncing a definite opinion upon the scheme, to allow the Bill to be read a second time, and fairly considered. When objections to the construction of a tunnel were raised in England on the only ground of objection, the scare of some leading military men, they created surprise and regret in France. France equally, or I should say more in danger, if there be danger; but through a sentiment of reciprocal national respect met our refusals with calm and dignity. The desire for continuous communication by railway between the two countries is so great in France, that I am assured in the highest quarters that in the final agreement to be concluded France would willingly grant every guarantee and every reasonable precaution which England could demand. Why do not our Government tell that of France what they really want? Why do they not negotiate with the Great Powers of Europe for the neutralisation of the Tunnel? I beg to move the Second Reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir E. Watkin.*)

*(3.40.) SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Mr. Speaker, I confess I had anticipated that a larger portion of the hon. Member's speech would have been occupied with some valid arguments for troubling the House upon this subject. This is no new matter. The present Bill has been rejected four times by the House of Commons, and in 1888 it was rejected by no less a majority than 142 votes, by no Party Division, for many of the staunchest supporters of the right hon. Gentleman opposite voted against the Bill after ample Debate, and after the hon. Member for Hythe (Sir E. Watkin) had obtained the powerful support of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone). I suppose I must not say there was any change of opinion on the part of the right hon. Gentleman—not the least, although it emanated in a change of vote, for I have no doubt the Channel Tunnel has always been dear to the heart of the right hon. Gentleman, even in the days when adverse circumstances compelled him to vote against it. I listened to the speech of the hon. Member for Hythe in the hope that I should discover some reasons for his again pressing this matter on the consideration of the House of Commons. What were his reasons? He dwelt at some length on an alleged pledge of Lord Beaconsfield in 1874. By the hon. Member's own statement, what happened amounted to no pledge at all. It simply amounted to a promise to give consideration to the subject—I admit favourable consideration to it—in principle at a time when it had really not been discussed by the country or the military experts at all, and to the appointment of the hon. Member for Yarmouth as a Commissioner to consult with Commissioners of the French Government upon the International arrangements which would become necessary if the Tunnel should ever be constructed. There was absolutely no pledge given by Lord Beaconsfield and his Colleagues which could possibly bind this country to any future support of the Channel Tunnel: and the best proof of that is that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, when he succeeded to the responsibilities of office as Prime Minister, felt it his duty absolutely to ignore any pledges of the kind, and to oppose the project. Then the hon. Member for Hythe told us something about the discovery of coal. That was, no doubt, a very remarkable discovery. I am not aware that it has been laid open quite so completely and so agreeably to public inspection as the commencement of the workings of the Channel Tunnel; but he did not allege that, even if that discovery should prove to be a practical reality, that any large quantity of coal found under the cliffs at Dover could by any possibility be sent to France through the couple of lines of Channel Tunnel he desires to construct. Another argument used by the hon. Member was that since 1888 several other schemes had been proposed for crossing the Channel, in competition with his own proposal. I do not see how that fact, if it be a fact, tends to recommend his tunnel to the more favourable consideration of the House. The hon. Member has thrown out a challenge to me which I do not shrink from accepting. During the past year the hon. Member has endeavoured to extract from me, on behalf of the Government, a declaration that it is our determination to refuse to permit any other means of communication between England and France except on the surface of the sea. All I can say is that I hope that I shall never be guilty of making so absurd a statement. We do not know what the future may bring forth. In the future there may be methods proposed for crossing the Channel, which are at unknown and which might appear as impossible to us now as the construction of the Forth Bridge would have seemed to our ancestors. Those proposals when they come to be made will have to be considered on their own particular merits. At the present moment we are not called upon to deal with the possible schemes of the future, but with the proposal of the hon. Member for constructing the Channel Tunnel. I should wish, in the first place, before I deal with this thoroughly threshed out subject, to make a remark upon the mode in which this matter has been presented to the House to-day. I suppose that those who were present in the House during the speech of the hon. Member for Hythe heard him say something about the small and inno-

cent character of the proposal which the House is asked to sanction, and that view of the subject is enlarged upon in the Paper which was circulated among hon. Members this morning by the promoters of the Bill. I think that I never read a more audacious document. It states:—

> "This Bill, while relating to a subject of national importance and interest, is yet in itself of a most innocent character. It in no sense whatever authorises the construction of the Tunnel, but simply enables the Channel Tunnel Company to continue experimental borings and works for the sole purpose of ascertaining whether or not a permanent tunnel for railway purposes beneath the Channel be practicable. So far from the Bill authorising the construction and maintenance of the Channel Tunnel, the Bill, by Clause 5, expressly reserves to the Lords of the Treasury the power of authorising its construction in the event of the experimental works proving its practicability. The Bill also, by Clause 6, provides that, should the Tunnel hereafter be constructed, the Lords of the Treasury may, at any time within five years after its opening for traffic, require it, and all power over it, to be transferred to the Lords of the Treasury, or to such other Department of the Government as they may direct, who would thenceforth be the sole owners thereof. From the foregoing statement of the provisions of the Bill, it will be seen how completely the public interests are protected in the event of the construction of the Tunnel being found practicable, and of its being hereafter constructed, as that cannot be done without the formal consent and concurrence of the Government of the day, and, in the event of such consent being given and the Tunnel being constructed, the Government will have the full power of taking and retaining possession of the works. Seeing, therefore, how entirely the public interests are protected by the terms of the present Bill, the promoters respectfully ask the House to pass its Second Reading in order that the Bill may be considered in its details by a Select Committee."

That appears to contain a proposition which I do not think that the hon. Member himself will defend, because, under the guise of asking for the sanction of the House to the continuation of an experiment, it proposes to leave the determination of the question, which is one of great national importance, whether the Channel Tunnel shall or shall not be constructed in the hands of the Government of the day, and not in those of Parliament. Surely the hon. Member himself will not call that a very small matter. In reference to this point, I contend now, as I have contended before, that this question as to whether the Channel Tunnel shall be constructed or not, is one which it is absolutely impossible can be satisfactorily determined by one of the Committees of this House, to which we entrust the consideration of ordinary private business. What would be the value of a decision of such a Committee, before whom, according to our rules, no opponent to this Bill could have a *locus standi*, because there are no private interests affected? No lesser tribunal than Parliament itself is qualified to deal with a question of such great national importance as this. The question, therefore, that we now have to consider is whether this Tunnel shall be made or not. The grounds upon which I object to the formation of the Tunnel are—first, that its construction will create a new source of danger to this country. That is a proposition which is universally admitted by all the highest Parliamentary, military, and scientific authorities, and, indeed, it is admitted by the promoters of the Bill themselves, because they have confessed that if the Tunnel is constructed it will be necessary to construct fortifications at the British end of the Tunnel and to provide means of flooding or destroying it if need should arise. But how are the means of guarding it to be provided? How are these fortifications to be paid for? It has never been suggested that any company formed to make the Channel Tunnel could possibly take upon itself, in addition to the cost of constructing the Tunnel, the extra liability of providing for the cost of these fortifications and of the consequential increase in our Military Force. Certainly no company could obtain shareholders which undertook such a liability; and, therefore, those extra expenses must fall upon the taxpayers of the country. And what would the latter get in return for bearing that expense? We have heard a great deal of the commercial advantages which would accrue to the country from the construction of the Tunnel. But although vague anticipations of this kind have always been put forward by the hon. Member and his friends, they have never condescended to detailed argument upon the point, and I therefore venture to assert that they are unable to support their statements by proofs. In the next place, when all the expense of constructing the necessary fortifications has been incurred and our Military Forces have been increased, there will still remain a risk which could not be got rid of by any means in our power. In these circumstances, I ask, had we not better leave well alone, and thus avoid all need for the precautions which the hon. Member himself admits would have to be taken if the Tunnel were to be constructed? It is admitted by the highest authorities who have considered the subject that the risk to which I have referred would be incurred if we were to consent to the Tunnel being made. In 1883 the minority of the Joint Committee of the Lords and Commons, who reported in favour of the construction of the Tunnel, admitted that the making of the Tunnel would, in some respects, modify the conditions under which the defences of this country would have to be considered, and that special precautions would be necessary to prevent it from falling into the hands of an enemy; and they admitted, further, that its possession either during the progress of operations or an occupation of English soil would be highly advantageous to the invading force and injurious to the nation; and they conceded that, if it could be shown that no means could be devised to prevent the Tunnel when once made from passing into the hands of the enemy, its formation would be in the highest degree objectionable. The question was, could such means be devised? That was referred to a scientific Committee of Military and Engineering Authorities, who made numerous recommendations for the security of the Tunnel of a very complicated and costly character. But the Scientific Committee reported that while, by the means they recommended, the Tunnel might be made absolutely useless to an enemy, it would be presumptuous to place absolute confidence in the most complete arrangements for preventing it from falling into the hands of an enemy, thus absolutely rejecting the presumption on which the Minority Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee in favour of this Tunnel was based. The fact is, that the risk could not be absolutely obviated, because there can be no perfect certainty in human affairs. But what would the risk be? In the first place, there is the chance of surprise at this end of the Tunnel, either with or without the previous declaration of war. There is the chance of the Tunnel falling into the hands of the enemy by treason; there is a very great chance of hesitation at the supreme moment on the part of those who would be charged with the tremendous responsibility of deciding, when our relations with France were very much strained, whether such a great work should be destroyed, or flooded, or not; and then there is the chance, finally, of the failure of the machinery which might be devised for flooding or mining the Tunnel: machinery which could never be tested to see if it was in working order. It is all very well for speakers to say, as was said in 1888, that these chances are so improbable that they could not happen; but I venture to say that they have happened in other countries in past times, and that there is no reason why they should not happen again. But what is the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian? He asked the House in 1888 why we were to be fearful of an invasion by France when in past history England had invaded France more often than France had invaded England, and even the great Napoleon had been unable to invade us, now that the numbers of our population have, comparatively, so much increased that we have less reason to fear invasion from the French than they have to fear invasion from us. Well, I should like to say that, in my humble judgment, it is not a question of the number of the population of either country, or of the wealth of either country, except so far as greater wealth offers greater temptation, or even of the ultimate resources of either country; it is a question of the military power which the organisation of either country enables it to place on a given spot at very short notice indeed. Will anyone pretend that our military organisation, as it exists at present, can be compared with the military organisation of France? Of course it cannot. I do not doubt if we had, as the hon. Member for Hythe suggested in his speech, conscription in this country, the most timid of our Military Authorities would be ready enough to sanction the making of a Channel Tunnel; but we have no conscription in this country; and if there is one subject on which I believe the House and the country would be more unanimous than any other it would be in the feeling that we should never have it. We do not want to make it the first object of our national life, as Continental nations unfortunately make it now, to establish this nation as a great Military Power. We have refrained from doing so, confident in the strength of our natural defences, and we do not want to be driven to take such a course by the breach which would be made in those defences by such schemes as those of the hon. Member for Hythe.

*Sir E. WATKIN: The scheme is that of men like Lord Beaconsfield, not mine.

*Sir M. HICKS BEACH: The only opinion, I believe, Lord Beaconsfield ever expressed, or that the hon. Member for Hythe could quote him as expressing, on the scheme, was that he had doubt, and grave doubt, whether, if the Channel Tunnel were constructed, it would ever pay a farthing of dividend. These are the objections I would urge against the proposal of the hon. Member. They stand on the debit side of the account; what can be put on the credit side of the account? He has told us, in the first place, that the Tunnel would be a new route for bringing food, merchandise, and raw material to England in the event of the sea being closed against us, just as if that route would be available if France were hostile to us, and if it is at all probable that any combination of Powers against us, with France still friendly to us, could close the sea to the commerce of England. Then the hon. Member has told us that the Tunnel would be a great guarantee of peace with France, forgetting that the relations between some of those very Continental countries which he named, whose railway communications are numerous, while the possibilities of their land communication are unbounded, are infinitely more strained, and have been more strained for many years than, I am happy to say, have been and are the relations between England and France. Then it is said that the Tunnel is to be a great artery of commercial intercourse between England and the Continent. The hon. Member has not said it would be possible that any amount of heavy goods should be taken through the Tunnel; there would be no time for such traffic, nor could the Tunnel, as a means of conveyance for heavy goods, compete with the sea. He looks to it

mainly as a means of increasing the amount of passenger traffic between England and the Continent—the accommodation of the class of passengers who can afford to pay for the luxury of greater speed and escape from the discomforts of a sea voyage—and also, to some extent, for the transit of light and expensive merchandise. On the last point I would say that any benefit this country might derive from the construction of the Tunnel as a means of transit for light and expensive merchandise, would, I believe, be far outweighed by the loss our shipping interests might sustain from the change that would be effected in the trade between England and the East. A large part of the trade between Europe and the East is now distributed over Europe from London and Liverpool, but if there were railway communication with the Continent, that trade would be much more likely to break bulk at Marseilles or even at Brindisi than to come to England at all. I contend, therefore, that there is nothing in the benefits which could be derived from this scheme which should outweigh the objections to it. I would remind the House that they have against it all the highest Parliamentary, military, and scientific authorities, that on four previous occasions they have rejected it by a large majority, and that it is defended to-day by no better arguments than those which were adduced in its favour before. I ask them again to reject it as unhesitatingly as it was rejected in 1888; and I move that this Bill be read a second time this day six months.

Amendment moved, to leave out the word "now," in order to add at the end of the Question the words "on this day six months."—(*Sir M. Hicks Beach.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

(4.10.) Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I shall be sorry if the right hon. Gentleman and the Government should be disposed to complain of my contributing to the prolongation of a Debate which they think unnecessary, and against which they urge the rejection of this Bill by the House of Commons on four previous occasions. The right hon. Gentleman will recollect that he has himself to blame for imposing on me that necessity, because he has found it needful for the purposes of his own argument to refer to what he considers, or his friends consider, inconsistency on my part in respect to this important question. The right hon. Gentleman and every speaker on the Front Bench know that there are certain subjects on which they are perfectly safe in making references to me. Any references to my inconsistency or to my capacity to express myself in the English language are certain to draw forth cheers from the forces marshalled on the Ministerial Benches. I only refer to this matter of consistency because it almost makes it necessary for me to mention that on all occasions I have held that this plan or project ought not to be opposed; and, further than that, I have deemed opposition to it on the merits, and particularly on the score of danger, to be not only unnecessary, not only unwarrantable, but even, if I may so speak, ridiculous. It must not be supposed that I am claiming any credit to myself as a friend of this undertaking. I have never given to this undertaking any further support than justice and honesty demanded on its behalf in the House of Commons. Beyond this, I have given to it no sort of countenance or patronage further than that of having travelled in a special train, not at my own expense, to the Tunnel works some years ago, and having been hospitably entertained and partaken of excellent champagne at the English end of the proposed Tunnel. With regard to the champagne, so far as my recollection goes, that kind of countenance was very liberally and largely conceded to this project by Gentlemen sitting on the other side of the House. I admit, as the right hon. Gentleman stated, that the Government of which I was a Member voted against a Channel Tunnel Bill. My right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) on that occasion expressed the mind of the Government, but there was not a word spoken on behalf of the Government adverse to the principle of a tunnel. Undoubtedly, this is not a Party question, and there are some who have changed their minds upon it, including one or two of my oldest, best, and nearest friends. At the time referred to, the Government then in Office found themselves in extreme difficulties in carrying on public business, and they thought, rightly or wrongly, that these difficulties were mainly owing to systematic obstruction carried on in the main by the Party to which the right hon. Gentleman belongs. On that account we felt we could not give up the time necessary for the consideration of a question of this kind. The right hon. Gentleman is right in speaking and voting against this Bill if he believes the plan is a bad plan, and if he thinks it is impossible for the Government to be neutral upon this question. We considered at the time it was not compatible with our duty to press forward an important Bill which would have required that extraordinary facilities should be provided for the discussion of the subject. I claim no credit as an active promoter of this project. The warmth of my promotion consists simply in the warmth of disapproval and condemnation of the arguments of opponents. The right hon. Gentleman says there has been unanimity on the part of all the highest Parliamentary, scientific, and military authorities in condemning this plan. I do not know where he draws his line. This is a line by which, together with most of my hon. Friends sitting near me, I am entirely excluded as not being entitled to give any opinion of weight on a question of this kind. The right hon. Gentleman and his friends alone are entitled to reckon among the highest Parliamentary authorities. We have no title to be heard, though one of us, at least, was serving his country in Parliament before the human race was enriched by the birth of the right hon. Gentleman. I have no objection to that line of defence; but it should be understood that when the right hon. Gentleman speaks of the highest authorities of any kind, it means those who agree with him and entertain his opinions. I think the best argument of the right hon. Gentleman was that this Bill had been four times rejected by the House of Commons. But it would be very difficult to mention any great and important project of law, whether in this region of public works or in any other region, that is now upon the Statute Book, and that now forms a valuable part of the commercial arrangements or political liberties of the people, with respect to which it may not be stated that it was rejected four times, or more than four times. Notwithstanding, I admit that the argument is not without force. But permit me to observe that it is quite fair on my part to allege that there is a counter argument, which is this. My hon. Friend the Member for Hythe, Lord Stalbridge, and others who have been concerned in projects of this kind, prosecuted those projects anterior to the present state of feeling, and with the universal favour of the country. We may here retort the epithet of the right hon. Gentleman. The first proposal I heard for a Channel Tunnel was that of Mr. Ward Hunt, a most distinguished member of the Party opposite, who waited upon me, when I was Chancellor of the Exchequer, during the time of Lord Palmerston's Government, as head of a deputation proceeding from the main promoters of the Tunnel. I quote him, but it is useless to quote individuals. I know of one single exception, and with that exception I do not believe that the name of a man can be quoted among the highest authorities, the middling authorities, or the lowest authorities, who at that time raised his voice against the Channel Tunnel. The right hon. Gentleman says that the Government of Lord Beaconsfield did nothing to pledge themselves to the Channel Tunnel. The question is, did the Government pursue a course of action which pledged that Government? Most certainly they did. They appointed Commissioners to communicate with the French Government upon the subject, to examine and inquire into all the details of an International proceeding. I do not say that it amounted to an engagement, but it amounted to the expectation of an engagement, and a just expectation. I may also add that whilst I think that our position in respect to the Government of France on this question of the Channel Tunnel is a humiliating position, on the other hand, the Government of France deserves, in my opinion—and I am glad to take this opportunity of declaring it in this House—the highest credit and the warmest acknowledgment on our part for never having made our altered position a subject of complaint. That International proceeding was taken; the Report of the Commission was made by the Joint Commission on the part of the two countries, assuming the principle of the Tunnel, and pointing out in what way all the multitudinous arrangements in detail were to be made. That Report was quite as valid and important a document as any other International Report. I do not recollect that the Commissioners were made Privy Councillors, but in every other particular the Commission had all the importance of an engagement having the highest sanction. I say, then, that the promoters of this Tunnel, when they are told that the Bill has been rejected four times, are perfectly justified in saying, "Yes; but recollect that it was a Bill which, for many years, had received the unquestioning assent and approbation of all classes of this country, which had the distinct countenance and approval of successive Governments, and with respect to which, as we think, an unreasoning panic has been raised. Therefore, we are justified in again and again questioning, at proper intervals, that which we know to be a thoroughly unreasonable decision." I must admit that the right hon. Gentleman is perfectly justified in stating that my hon. Friend the Mover of the Motion is not entitled to say that the House will not commit itself by its vote. I regard the Second Reading of this Bill, if it be carried, as a Vote completely giving sanction to the Channel Tunnel in principle. The right hon. Gentleman says that the expectation of commercial advantages are vague expectations, and are reduced to a minimum by the estimates of adverse critics. Has the right hon. Gentleman ever read any examinations of the witnesses for the first projects of railways in this country? Does he know that George Stephenson was challenged boldly and most confidently to say whether he would undertake to give his judgment that the steam engine would be able to drag a train of carriages at 10 miles an hour? And, further, he was pressed as to the possibility of eight miles an hour; and, finally, I think, whether he would guarantee that the train would go at four miles an hour. In all these questions, where strong interests are excited, the precise amount of commercial benefit to be expected will be the subject of great differences of opinion. The right hon. Gentleman says, "Let well alone." Those words are not so musical to me as they may be to younger men; because I remember the time when, under a Conservative Government, the defence Estimates of this country for the Army and Navy, which have now reached £35,000,000, stood at £11,000,000 a year. Do not let it be supposed that I am unaware that some portion of that expense has been most warrantably and justly incurred for effecting essential improvements in the Army. But I have known more panics and alarms a great deal in the days of high Estimates than in the days of low Estimates. It is only a very few years since that we had a very extraordinary panic raised on the subject of the Navy, in days of high Estimates. So I am quite prepared for a continuance and recurrence of these panics. I believe they are states of feeling which thrive by what they feed on; and that what is true of the love of money is also true of the love of panic, sufficiently to invalidate the argument, "Let well alone." The right hon. Gentleman dwells, and I do not wonder at it, upon a Report of a distinguished Committee of Military Officers and Engineers. I think the right hon. Gentleman pushes the matter too far in saying that no distinguished Military Authorities are friendly to the project.

*Sir M. HICKS BEACH: I did not say that.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I believe, then, that the right hon. Gentleman said a very small minority. I am sceptical about these Reports of great Military and Engineering Authorities on subjects of this kind. I am sceptical as to what they condemn from the recollection of what they have approved. There was never a more complete concurrence of Military Authorities, as far as I know, than in those Reports of great officers and engineers which led up to an expenditure of £2,000,000 at Alderney, on the most confident assurances ever delivered by man—before we ever came near the £2,000,000, and were lingering among the hundred thousands—that after we had spent that money we should close up Cherbourg, and never hear of it again as a port for military expeditions. These are not professional questions. On professional questions I have a great respect for Professional Authorities, but with regard to the amount of danger—and that distant danger—to be incurred, I do not think that they are in any degree to be considered as the best authorities. At this moment my belief is that the people of England are not opposed to this tunnel. The question is one which does not enter into the motives and considerations of elections; but if you could get at the feelings of the sensible population of this country—and by that I do not mean only the people who agree with me, but the mass of the working population—I believe that it would be found that they look upon the opposition to the Channel Tunnel on the ground of danger as an almost preposterous opposition, and share none of those apprehensions which perplex the right hon. Gentleman. Then the right hon. Gentleman says that this a question of military power. No, Sir, it would be a question of military power if we had a land frontier with France. But we have a sea frontier with France, and the right hon. Gentleman cannot suppose, or venture to assert, that naval power does not enter into this question more largely than military power. The right hon. Gentleman points out that we have no conscription in this country. I did not expect to hear a Minister of the Crown in this country casting a longing eye on that system.

*Sir M. HICKS BEACH: I denounced the system of conscription as strongly as any Member of this House could do. What I said was that the Military Authorities now opposed to the Channel Tunnel might, if we had the conscription, view the project without apprehension.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I regret to have misunderstood the right hon. gentleman. However, Sir, I was not aware that it was admitted in this country that the conscription was a better, a sounder, and a more solid ground for military defence than the system under which our Army is recruited. The right hon. Gentleman drew forth a lively cheer by his reference to a doubt expressed by Lord Beaconsfield whether this Channel Tunnel would ever pay 1 per cent. dividend. Why, Sir, I recollect the judgment delivered by the best authorities in the world on the question of the Suez Canal. A Commission was appointed of Dutch engineers, who, from their practice in their own country, are the greatest authority on all great hydraulic questions and their results. They said that the Suez Canal was possible, and would be useful, but it was hopeless to expect that it would ever pay 1 per cent. That is not the question. I do not ask myself what dividend the Manchester Ship Canal will pay. Some say it will pay a good dividend, while others maintain that it will not pay at all. I am not bound to protect the purse and the pocket of the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir E. Watkin), who in these matters is perfectly competent to take care of himself. The whole question for us is whether a solvent person is ready to undertake the scheme. Then the right hon. Gentleman said no arguments had been adduced in favour of the Tunnel. I think the Member for Hythe may have felt that the general arguments in this case had been pretty well exhausted on former occasions, and I should be very sorry to repeat them. I did not understand, however, that there ever was a period when the power of military concentration on the part of France in reference to England was so great as it was in the time of Napoleon, and then it proved utterly abortive. I hold my old opinion with reference to what the right hon. Gentleman has quoted, and I believe that we have invaded France ten times for once that France has invaded us. We have held the capital of France alone once, and we have entered it in conjunction with other Powers, and if there is a country which would be justified in feeling sore and apprehensive on the subject of the Channel Tunnel it is the French nation. In France there has been no apprehension. The French know that we are mainly the masters of the sea, and if we were to cease to have a prevailing command of the Channel that would, for the purpose of invasion, be fatal to our position. The question does not turn upon the Channel Tunnel in the slightest degree. The right hon. Gentleman has laboured to prove that for the transport of heavy goods, the Tunnel would only be available to a very limited extent. If so, how is it to carry the enormous heavy stores required by an invading army? The case of those who promote this project is a case resting upon general considerations which are pretty generally understood. We wish to promote the intercourse of nations. We have seen that enormous advantage has been produced by everything which increases that intercourse. No doubt it may be true that railway communications are not sufficient to abate and neutralise active and powerful causes of hostility; but, fortunately, we have no powerful and active causes of hostility to France. We have seen the immense effects which have been produced by the Commercial Treaties with France. We see that France, although nearly the most protective Power in the world, is almost the only country in Europe which has not during the last few years been reactionary. Whether she will always continue so I cannot undertake to prophesy. That she has not been reactionary is owing to this augmentation of intercourse. It is often said that we wish to see this intercourse augmented, and that we wish to see an unbounded number of great steamers, and the largest possible intercourse carried on. But there is a great deal more military danger in the multiplication of fast steamers and of harbours than there is in the creation of this Tunnel. I am ashamed of the attitude of this country in the face of France. I am obliged, if I meet a Frenchman, to say something of the conduct of recent Parliaments of this country in regard to the Channel Tunnel which I should be very unwilling to say in this House. I feel that we are in a position to say to France what 2,000 years ago the Spartan warrior said to the Athenian. The Athenian, referring to the frequent invasions of Attica by the Spartans, said, "Many of your dead sleep by the side of the Ilissus," and the Spartan replied, "And not one of your dead sleeps by the side of the Eurotas." There have been a hundred Englishmen who sleep among the dead in France for one Frenchman who sleeps among the dead in England. Now, Sir, I wish to bring about a recurrence of that sound and healthy state of things between England and France which existed as to this subject 20 years ago. I admit that there has been a tremendous reaction. I admit that we have travelled some stages towards barbarism in this matter through the change of opinion that has taken place. I admit that that change is not confined to one Party or the other although the Party opposite have the honour of claiming much the larger part of it. I feel convinced that it will pass away. We are not in such a hurry as to think that the welfare of the country depends upon the Tunnel, and we can accordingly afford to wait. Being asked by the hon. Member for Hythe (Sir E. Watkin) to give my opinion on the Bill, and the right hon. Gentleman having forced me into the field, I must repeat the sentiment which on every occasion I have been ready to express, and say that I believe this to be a considerable measure and a useful measure, and that the arguments opposed to it deserve neither acceptance nor respect.

(4.40.) The House divided:—Ayes 153; Noes 234.—(Div. List, No. 116.)

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for three months.

QUESTIONS.

LAND TAX COMMISSIONERS.

MR. BOWEN ROWLANDS (Cardiganshire): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that on the 17th January, 1889, and 27th February, 1890, the Land Tax Commissioners for Banbury, Oxfordshire, obtained from Major H. C. Maul, of Horley House, Horley, two several sums of £5 12s. each, on the representation that the same were due from him to the Commissioners for Land Tax in respect of his tenancy of Horley House and premises, the last of the two sums having been obtained by the Commissioners under a threat of distress, although the Land Tax for the said premises had been for many years redeemed, and nothing was due to the Commissioners from Major Maul in respect thereof; if he will explain why it is that, although the Commissioners have admitted this to be the case, they refuse to refund the two sums of £5 12s. each to Major Maul; and whether he will institute inquiries, and direct that the two sums of £5 12s. each be returned to Major Maul?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): The facts appear to be substantially as stated, except that inquiries have not established the allegation that a threat of distraint was made. The Land Tax Commissioners, who are appointed by Parliament by name, have been entrusted by law with the assessment and collection of the Land Tax. Neither the Inland Revenue nor the Treasury have any control over those Commissioners, or any power to interfere, so long as the fixed *quota* of Land Tax charged on each parish is paid over to the Crown. This has been done in the present instance, and as the Crown in no case receives any sum in excess of the *quota*, there is no fund out of which any re-payments could be made. The Crown has not benefited by these erroneous charges, but the other taxpayers of the parish have in consequence contributed less than their share of the parochial burden. It is not a matter for me to suggest whether or not the district Commissioners for Land Tax might see fit to make such an assessment for the present year, 1890-91, as would provide a sum in excess of the *quota* sufficient to repay Major Maul.

WARLIKE STORES.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary for India whether, the War Office having refused to submit to arbitration the question of prices for warlike stores, it is proposed to take any steps to obtain a decision of this House on a question which has now been pending for many years between the War Office and the Government of India?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): I do not believe it is the intention of my noble Friend the Secretary of State for India to seek the assistance of the House of Commons in settling this matter.

MR. BRADLAUGH: In consequence of the right hon. Gentleman's answer, I beg to give notice to the Secretary of State for War that I shall raise the question on the Army Estimates.

EAST AFRICAN COMPANY AND SLAVERY.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can now state precisely the attitude of the East African Company towards slavery under the late proclamations of their Representative in the territories nominally belonging to the Sultan of Zanzibar, but really administered by the East African Company, and in any other territories which they possess or have influence over?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): The "attitude" was described in the answer of the 15th May. We have no later information.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: The answer of the 15th of May did not convey any real informatian to the House. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will tell us whether he is or is not possessed of precise information on the subject. I beg to give notice that I shall repeat the question.

CAIRO OPERA HOUSE.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if it is true that, notwithstanding the extreme indebtedness of Egypt and the very small taxation paid by Europeans, the present Egyptian Government has again subsidised the Opera started by the late Khedive?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: A subvention of £4,000 is granted to the Opera. It is thought that a moderate expenditure for this purpose is directly remunerative, as making Cairo more attractive to foreigners. This is a question on which the Egyptian Government is the best judge.

PENNY POSTAGE REVENUE.

MR. H. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he can state the surplus Revenue now derived from the Penny Postage; whether he can give an estimate of the loss which would result from the establishment of a halfpenny rate for letters throughout the United Kingdom; and whether, provided the Government do not see their way to reduce the minimum rates of postage for letters and newspapers throughout the United Kingdom, he will consider the practicability of adopting local rates of a halfpenny for letters and one farthing for circulars, newspapers, &c., which might be calculated on a reduced limit of weight, and it is estimated would secure the carriage of a very large amount of local letters, newspapers, &c., now carried by private service?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University): I am unable to state the exact amount of the surplus Revenue derived from the penny postage, but it is safe to assume that practically the net Revenue of the Post Office is earned by the letters sent at the penny rate. Computed on the number of inland letters, according to the latest completed Return, the loss to the Revenue from the substitution of a halfpenny postage for the present penny postage rate would be about £3,100,000 a year. Moreover, that loss would not be materially lessened by any increase that might reasonably be expected to result from the reduction in the postage rate. There is no such difference in the cost of dealing with a local letter or newspaper, as distinguished from an ordinary inland letter or newspaper, as would justify a lower rate of postage for the local letter or newspaper. Besides this, a departure from the simple and highly convenient system of an uniform inland rate, would entail innumerable complications and difficulties. As regards the request for a farthing local rate for newspapers, it is right to state that the present Newspaper Post is already carried on at a serious loss to the State, and that any reduction in the rate of charge for newspapers would necessarily increase that loss.

THE JUBILEE OF THE PENNY POST.

MR. BRADLAUGH): I wish to ask the Postmaster General whether he will so extend the time during July for the general holiday appointed for 2nd July in celebration of the Jubilee of the Penny Post, that those *employés* who cannot get the holiday between 2nd July and 5th July may obtain a day's leave in lieu thereof at a later date?

*MR. RAIKES: The step suggested by the hon. Member is already under consideration. Indeed, I hope it may be practicable to extend even beyond July the time during which a day's special leave may be given in lieu of the 2nd July, and I propose very shortly issuing a Departmental Notice on the subject.

THE GERMANS IN EAST AFRICA.

MR. ERNEST BECKETT (York, W.R., Whitby): I beg to ask the Under

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether restrictions prohibiting the passage of British caravans or British traders through the northern portion of the German sphere of influence in East Africa have been issued and put in force; whether such restrictions are in contravention of Article 5 of the Berlin Act of 1885; and whether the Government propose to take any action to relieve British traders from these restrictions, if illegal, and to secure the observance of the Berlin Act for the future?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: A decree was recently issued by Major Wissmann forbidding the ingress of caravans into the German sphere behind Tanga and Pangani, on grounds connected with military operations which were then being executed; but, on the personal representation of Colonel Enan Smith, it was shortly afterwards unconditionally withdrawn.

THE CORPORATION DESTRUCTOR.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will now communicate to the House the purport of his promised Report on the subject of the alleged emission of noisome smoke from the "Destructor" belonging to the Commissioners of Sewers of the City of London, and situated at Lett's Wharf, Lambeth; and what action does he propose to take in the matter?

*The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I have to-day received a Report from Mr. Fletcher, one of the Inspectors of the Local Government Board, on this subject. The wharf referred to is used as a place of deposit for the contents of dustbins, market refuse, &c. After some separation by hand sorting, the combustible part of the refuse is burnt in a furnace or destructor. If this refuse were wholly burnt, Mr. Fletcher reports that there would be no smell from it; but, from the construction of the apparatus, he considers there is reason to believe that some of the sickly smelling steam and smoke, which rise from the material as heating commences before active combustion is set in, passes up the chimney. He considers that this might be remedied by the erection of a combustion chamber, which could be kept throughout at a strong red heat, so that the gases, when led through it, would be completely burnt. The Inspector has communicated with the Deputy Engineer of the City Commissioners, who has promised that this proposal shall receive consideration. I will also communicate with the Commissioners of Sewers on the subject.

NEWGATE.

Mr. PICKERSGILL: I wish to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what is the present state of the negotiations between the Corporation of the City of London and the Government as regards the acquisition by the former of the site of Newgate Prison?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Matthews, Birmingham, E.): The present state of the negotiations is that the Prison Commissioners have submitted to the City Architect a scheme to facilitate the objects which the City Authorities have in view, and at the same time not to diminish the number of cells at the disposal of the Prison Authorities. The City Architect has been furnished with an estimate of the cost of the necessary alterations, and his reply is being awaited.

Mr. PICKERSGILL: May I ask whether the sanction of this House will be asked before any final arrangement is made?

Mr. MATTHEWS: I do not know there will be any need for it.

Mr. PICKERSGILL: But is the case not on all fours with the acquisition of Clerkenwell Prison for the Parcel Post?

Mr. MATTHEWS: No; I think the hon. Member is under a misapprehension. I will, however, look into the matter.

CONDEMNED ADMIRALTY MEAT.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if he will state to the House what arrangements have been made by the Admiralty to preclude the possibility in future of any of the beef and pork which is deemed unfit for consumption on board Her Majesty's ships finding its way on board the ships of the mercantile marine; and whether such arrangements are permanent and irrevocable; and, if not, under what circumstances alone such arrangements can be ignored or revoked?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): Circumstances were brought to the notice of the Admiralty last year which pointed to the possibility of meat sold as unfit for human food being brought again into the market as suitable for consumption. It was accordingly decided that in future condemned salt beef or pork should not be sold by public auction, but that it should instead be sent to soap-boilers for use in the soap-boiling trade; and it was also decided that the meat, before being sent to these firms, should be treated chemically in such a manner as to render it impossible that it should be again used for human food. These regulations are unconditional, and no departure from them is allowable, except with the direct sanction of the Board of Admiralty, and I do not conceive it to be likely that any Board of Admiralty would sanction any reversal of the present arrangement that might lead to any repetition of the abuse I have described.

THE WESTERN AUSTRALIA CONSTITUTION BILL.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government have received any communications from the Australian Governments in reference to the re-instatement of Clause 8, expunged by the Select Committee, into the Western Australia Constitution Bill, and if he can state to the House the purport of such communications?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): No communication as to its re-instatement have been received, but a representation has been made by the Government of South Australia urging the omission of Clause 8, on the ground that all the Australasian colonies should be placed on the same footing as regards immigration.

THE NAVAL KNIGHTS OF WINDSOR.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty why the vacancies in the number of Naval Knights of Windsor are not filled up; and whether he can inform the House how many naval officers have applied for these vacancies?

LORD G. HAMILTON: Three naval officers have applied for the vacancies in the number of Naval Knights of Windsor, but two of them only can be considered as eligible for the appointment. I have not filled up the recent vacancies, as the reports of the visitors of the college are very unsatisfactory. In their judgment the college is not satisfying the conditions of the trust by which it is endowed. I am, therefore, considering a scheme for the better utilisation of the funds of the trust, and I do not propose in the meantime to fill up any vacancies that may occur.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Will the scheme be submitted to Parliament?

LORD G. HAMILTON: Yes, in all probability it will require a special Act of Parliament.

WINDSOR FOREST.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the authority of the Ranger of Windsor Great Park extends over the forests of Windsor and Swinley, and, if so, under what Statute; if not, whether it is by instructions from the Commissioners of Woods and Forests that the Royal keepers exercise their power to exclude the public from the green rides and open spaces in the forest; also whether he is aware that steel traps are set in open spaces of Windsor Forest within a few score yards of public roads, and that these traps have been recently found baited with rabbit, evidently set for foxes; whether he is aware that the chickens and domestic animals of neighbouring farmers have been caught and maimed within a few yards of their homesteads; and whether the Royal keepers in setting these traps are acting under instructions from the Commissioners of Woods and Forests; and, if not, upon whose instructions they are acting?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. W. L. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): The Ranger of Windsor Great Park has charge of the game in the Windsor Woods, including Swinley Woods. He is not appointed under any Statute. The game-keepers act under instructions from him, and not from the Commissioners of

Woods, who have no knowledge of the circumstances referred to by the hon. Member in his second question.

THE CROMER LICENSING JUSTICES.

MR. HENRY J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmforth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that, on the 1st October, 1889, when the Licensing Magistrates on the Bench at Cromer were Messrs. Cremer, Harbord, and Cabbell, Mr. Harbord left the Bench, applied to his colleagues Messrs. Cremer and Cabbell for a provisional licence, obtained it, and returned to the Bench; that Mr. Cabbell then left the Bench, applied to his colleagues Messrs. Cremer and Harbord for a provisional licence, and obtained it; whether the fact of Mr. Harbord having become a licence-holder disqualified him from acting as a Licensing Magistrate; whether, for taking part in granting Mr. Cabbell's licence, he became liable to any, and what penalty; and whether the Lord Chancellor has taken, or will take, any notice of these transactions of the Cromer Justices?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed that Mr. Harbord had not taken his seat on the Bench when his application was dealt with. His application was merely for a provisional licence, which is of no validity until it is confirmed. It was made in respect of an hotel proposed to be erected on property of which he was Trustee, and the plans of which had been approved at a previous meeting of the Bench. Under these circumstances I am advised that Mr. Harbord was not disqualified by this provisional licence from acting in the case of Mr. Cabbell's application, and that there has been no breach of the law.

CIVIL SERVICE CLERKS—LOWER DIVISION.

MR. J. KELLY (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments with reference to attendance books are to a large extent ignored, inasmuch as the Lower Division Clerks alone are required to enter the hours at which they reach their offices; and whether it is intended that the recommendations of the Commissioners in the matter shall be carried out only in the case of the superior officials; and, if not, whether steps will be taken forthwith to have the same rule applied to all classes throughout the Public Service?

MR. GOSCHEN: No, Sir; the recommendations are not ignored. I have already informed the hon. Member that the reason why the Lower Division Clerks have a condition imposed on them which, up till now, is not imposed on the Upper Division, is that the Minute relating to the latter has not yet been issued. My answer to the second question is, of course, in the negative. When the Treasury Minute is issued the hon. Member will see that the Government are not unmindful of the recommendations of the Royal Commission.

THE CONVICT BARTON.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the evidence submitted to the Coroner's Jury upon the inquest on the body of a convict, Andrew Barton, who died at the Portsmouth Convict Prison on 20th May, and to the verdict; and whether, in view of the serious allegations made against the Prison officials, it is intended to hold a public inquiry?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have not been able as yet to procure a full Report of the evidence submitted to the Coroner's Jury, but I hope shortly to have one; and in the meanwhile I have called for a full Report from the Visiting Directors, and when I receive this information I shall be in a position to judge whether further inquiry is necessary and what steps should be taken.

GLASGOW ELECTRIC LIGHTING.

SIR G. TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate the reason for the delay in proceeding with "The Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment Bill;" and whether he is aware that, upon the footing that this Bill would be proceeded with so as to enable the Board of Trade to proceed with the Electric Lighting Provisional Order of the Corporation of Glasgow, the Corporation have withdrawn that portion of their Bill now before Parliament relating to electricity?

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. Robertson, Bute): The only existing cause of delay is that, when I have moved the Second Reading, objection has been taken from the Opposition side of the House. So far as I know, the Bill on its merits is entirely uncontested; it relates to a matter of administrative detail; it is the result of careful consultation with the various authorities concerned; and I gather that it has the support of the right hon. Baronet. Accordingly, I trust the right hon. Baronet will use his influence with his friends when I again move the Second Reading to-night, and at the subsequent stages; and, if so, I doubt not that the Bill will pass without further loss of time.

BRIDGETON MEETING ON THE COMPENSATION CLAUSES.

Sir G. TREVELYAN: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is now satisfied that the gathering in the Mechanics' Hall at Bridgeton, to which he referred in the House before Whitsuntide, was a meeting of members of the liquor trade, and did not possess the character of what is ordinarily known as a public meeting?

*Mr. RITCHIE: I am not satisfied that the gathering was of the character alleged in the question, but I have no means of ascertaining the composition of meetings at which resolutions of that kind are passed. If I attempted to do so, I should be undertaking a task which would be beyond my powers and would occupy all my time; but I may say that representations have been made as to the bogus character of this meeting and also of meetings on the other side. I have not made any inquiry into the accuracy of the statements. I ought, however, to say that since the receipt of the telegram which I read to the House I have received copies of resolutions passed at meetings held at Bridgeton, protesting strongly against the proposals of the Government; and also at a meeting held at Bridgeton Cross in the open air, in the presence, it is said, of 2,000 people, protesting against the tactics of the Liberal Party, and thanking the Government for their manly attempt to grapple with the liquor problem.

Sir W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): Is the right hon Gentleman aware that at a large meeting held in Glasgow a resolution was passed condemning the surreptitious manner in which signatures are being obtained in Glasgow in favour of the Government proposals, the posters merely asking for signatures in favour of taxing liquor, promoting free education, the superannuation of the police, and the reduction of public houses, but making no mention of handing money over to the publicans?

*Mr. RITCHIE: I have not heard of the petition nor of the poster, but from what the right hon. Baronet says in regard to the poster I should think it gives a pretty accurate account of the proposal of the Government.

Mr. H. J. WILSON: Does the right hon. Gentleman still consider he made the statement on good evidence?

*Mr. RITCHIE: What statement?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MITCHELSTOWN.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a statement reported to have been made by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian at Hawarden on the 28th ultimo, in the following words:—

> "At Mitchelstown I am sorry to say that one policeman was badly damaged. You cannot wonder at its happening. He was badly damaged, and I believe his life was in some danger; but he recovered, and £1,000 was, I think, the sum levied off the district to compensate him for injuries he suffered in doing an illegal act;"

whether this statement is correct in fact; whether the policeman referred to was Constable Leahy; and whether he has recovered from his injuries and has returned to his duty, or what is the state of his health at the present time?

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co. Mid): Before the question is answered, I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he has put it at the instance of the Solicitor General for Ireland—a person named Carson?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): My attention has been called to the statement mentioned, which has been reported to have been made by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. The case referred to is evidently that of Constable

Leahy. It is the fact that this constable was savagely attacked and seriously and permanently injured. It is not the case that he was doing an illegal act. He was merely acting in the proper discharge of his duty. The Grand Jury, from the evidence before them, found this to have been the case, and awarded him the compensation mentioned in respect of the serious injuries received. He has never recovered from those injuries. They disabled him from further service in the Royal Irish Constabulary, from which he had accordingly to be discharged on pension. He is at the present time a complete cripple, suffering constantly severe pain from his injuries, unable to move about without crutches, and totally disabled from following any occupation.

Dr. TANNER: Is it not the case that the Resident Magistrate who has been connected with Mitchelstown, Mr. O'Neil Segrave, has been dismissed?

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Is not the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Coroner's Jury brought in a verdict of wilful murder against the constabulary?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe there was an absurd verdict returned by a Coroner's Jury, but I am not aware that it had anything to do with the injuries to Constable Leahy.

ALLEGED RIOTING AT JESSORE.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Secretary of State has yet received any communication from the Government of India respecting the disturbances, alleged rioting, and military occupation of districts in Jessore, Bengal; whether he can state to the House the nature of such communications; and whether he will lay them upon the Table?

Sir J. GORST: The Secretary of State has not received any information on the subject.

THE INDIAN POST OFFICE.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether it was with the sanction of the Secretary of State that Rule 732 of the Post Office Manual of 1881, that "No person other than a native of India can be appointed to any office in the Post Office Department," &c., has been altered in the Post Office Manual, Vol. III. of 1889, to the Rule (now Rule 389) that "Appointments in the Post Office Department are, with certain special exceptions, reserved for natives of India," &c.; whether he will state the nature of the "special exceptions," and when they were first acted upon; whether he will state the circumstances which induced this abrogation of a Rule imposed by the Secretary of State in 1872; and whether, if the alteration has been made without the knowledge of the Secretary of State, he will call for an explanation of the circumstances under which it was made?

Sir J. GORST: The Secretary of State has no information on the point, but will cause inquiries to be made.

"TIED HOUSES."

Mr. SUMMERS (Huddersfield): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will cause inquiry to be made as to the number of "tied houses" in each City, Municipal Borough, and Petty Sessional Division respectively in England and Wales?

Mr. GOSCHEN: The Inland Revenue Department has no knowledge of what houses are "tied" and what are not, as the question is one of private contracts, beyond the cognisance of the Government.

THE RIGHTS OF BRITISH SUBJECTS IN THE COLONIES.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, with reference to the instructions issued to Australian Governors, which contain a clause to the effect that any Act passed by the Colonial Legislatures "whereby the rights of British subjects not residing in the colony may be prejudiced," shall be reserved for the signification of Her Majesty's pleasure thereon, whether this Instruction has been held to include Acts authorising the imposition of restrictions on the immigration of British subjects; and if he can say in what respects the provisions of Clause 8 in the Western Australian Constitution Bill afford any further protection of the rights of British subjects than is already provided in the instructions?

Baron H. de WORMS: I may point ou to my hon. Friend that the words in the Royal Instructions are—

> "Any Bill of an extraordinary nature and importance, whereby our prerogative or the rights and property of our subjects not residing in the colony, or the trade and shipping of the United Kingdom and its Dependencies may be prejudiced."

It is certainly, at least, open to question whether the words "rights and property," which are conjunctive, would cover a restriction upon immigration to which my hon. Friend refers. The introduction of Clause 8 precludes any doubt upon the subject.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: Have these Acts in all cases been reserved?

BARON H. DE WORMS: Yes.

NEWFOUNDLAND.

SIR G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether there are any further Papers or Correspondence relating to any relations between Great Britain and France regarding the Newfoundland Fishery Question, which can now be presented in continuation of those last presented? I should also be glad to know whether the Government can give the House any information as to the landing of French Marines on the shores of Newfoundland?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Papers down to the latest date are being brought forward for publication with the utmost possible despatch. I hope they will be in the hands of hon. Members next week. They will contain the Articles of the Treaties bearing on the questions at issue, and will fully inform the House in regard to them. Information has now been received from Newfoundland that no French armed force landed at St. George's Bay, or elsewhere. The commander of a French man-of-war landed at the wharf alone and in uniform, and requested that some of the nets might be removed, and they were lifted accordingly by their owners. The Governor says that no threat was used, and that the request was fully justified. The French have not, in any manner, interfered with fishing. No case has occurred of non- payment of taxes, though a resolution to that effect was passed by a public meeting.

TITHE RECEIVERSHIPS.

MR. FARQUHARSON (Dorset, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will insert a clause in

the Tithes Bill now before Parliament, providing that when a Receiver is appointed the tithe owner shall become responsible for the proper cultivation of the lands whence the tithe so sought to be recovered is due; for the maintenance in proper repair of all buildings, gates, fences, and watercourses; and, if required, take over the occupation of the lands from the occupier, making to him such payments as are provided for under the Agricultural Holdings Acts, and as are by the custom of the country made by an incoming to an outgoing tenant?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The Receiver, if appointed, will be in the position of a Receiver under the ordinary law, under which, subject to the orders of the Court, he manages land in the same way as if he were the landlord, and arranges for letting it to persons who will cultivate it properly. If buildings, gates, fences, and watercourses require to be maintained, the Court will be entitled to obtain from the Receiver the same payments under the Agricultural Holdings Act, or under the custom of the country, as if the Receiver were an ordinary landlord. It will, therefore, be quite unnecessary to insert a clause making provision for these matters.

POSTMASTERSHIP OF BRURA.

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he is aware that John Cowhey, recently appointed Postmaster at Brura, County Limerick, was twice convicted of drunkenness, once of serious assault, and was also dismissed from the employment of the Prudential Assurance Company for proceedings in connection with a policy of assurance on the life of a man named James Murphy; and whether he will institute inquiries into these allegations, and, if proved true, will remove John Cowhey from the office of Postmaster?

*MR. RAIKES: I am not aware of one or two of the statements involved in the question, and I will inquire into them; but, as at present advised, I do not consider it either necessary or desirable to deprive Mr. Cowhey of the office of Sub-Postmaster at Brura, to which I recently appointed him.

THE SWEDISH LEPER.

DR. TANNER: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been directed to the case of leprosy in a Swedish emigrant, as reported in the *Liverpool Courier* of 22nd May; whether the woman in question was permitted to land in and pass through England, to pass the examination of the medical emigration officers of health at Liverpool, at their survey of the Cunard steamship *Cephalonia* on the 17th April last, and the second inspection at Queenstown by an officer of the same department; whether it is true that the woman in question was not allowed to land by the Port Authorities in Boston, U.S.A., after inspection by their medical inspector and several eminent American scientists, who declared the case to be one of genuine leprosy; and that the Cunard Company were, in consequence, compelled to bring her back to England; if it is true that on her arrival in Liverpool she was conveyed to the Brownlow Hill Workhouse, and there examined, as reported in the *Liverpool Weekly Mercury*—

> "By Dr. Hope, assistant medical officer of health for the city; Dr. Hill, the Board of Trade officer; and Dr. Robertson, who entertained little doubt that the case is one of leprosy."

And made special arrangements for her complete isolation; whether such isolation was effected on board the Cunard steamship on either passage; what has been done with the patient; and whether any steps will be taken to prevent the loathsome and infectious disease in question, as well as other contagious and infectious diseases difficult of detection, being propagated in consequence of the present system of inspection by medical Board of Trade Inspectors?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I am not in possession of full particulars with regard to the case to which the hon. Member refers, but I will cause inquiry to be made into all the circumstances.

DR. TANNER: If the right hon. Gentleman will tell me when it will be convenient to him to have the question repeated, I shall be happy to put it?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It may be necessary to refer to Boston for information, and, if so, it will be some time before I can get the information.

DR. TANNER: I hope the right hon. Gentleman will give his kind attention to the matter, as it involves a serious question of responsibility.

MR. GARDINER, R.M.

DR. TANNER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is a fact that the business at the Cork Police Office was seriously delayed and inconvenienced on Wednesday last, the 28th ultimo, in consequence of the absence of any Local or Resident Magistrate; why Mr. Gardiner, who is appointed Resident Magistrate for the district and office in question, failed to put in an appearance; and on how many similar occasions has he been absent during the past six months?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that there was some delay in holding the Court on the date mentioned, most of the Local Magistrates having been obliged to attend a funeral. The Resident Magistrate was unable to attend, as he was engaged on duty elsewhere. During the past six months the Resident Magistrate has attended the Court (a daily one) on 113 occasions, and has been absent on 44 occasions.

DR. TANNER: I beg to give notice that on the Estimates I shall call attention to the disgraceful conduct of this Magistrate, against whom criminal charges have been recently made, and I shall move that he be suspended from the ranks of the magistracy in Ireland.

MR. FLYNN: Is not the right hon. Gentlemen aware that solicitors have repeatedly complained of the inconvenience caused by the non attendance of magistrates?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware of any public inconvenience having been caused. No complaints have reached me.

DR. TANNER: Has the right hon. Gentleman made inquiry into the grave charges made against Mr. Gardiner?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

THE AQUARIUM POSTER.

MR. KELLY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the opinion expressed by Sir John Bridge, at Bow Street, on the

22nd ultimo, to the effect that the Aquarium advertisement known as "Zæo" was more or less indecent, and ought not to be exhibited in London, and that, in such a case, the proper course was for the Police Authorities to take action under the Metropolitan Police Acts or the Indecent Advertisements Act, 1889; whether the Chief Commissioner of Police has taken or intends to take any, and if so, what action in the matter; and, if not, whether he himself intends to see that steps are at once taken to prevent the further exhibition in the streets of the advertisement in question?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir; I have seen the statements made by the Chief Magistrate. I understand that the advice finally given by him was that the matter should be allowed to drop. The Commissioner of Police concurs with this view of the matter, and it is not his intention to take any action. I do not myself intend to take steps with regard to this advertisement.

BANKRUPTCY ADMINISTRATION.

MR. KELLY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state the number of cases, including those in the High Court with their various districts, in which Official Receivers in bankruptcy have, during the last three years, obtained summary administration orders, and the assets showed amounts of over £300; and whether many of the Official Receivers are in the constant habit of certifying cases to be under £300 when they are considerably over such amount?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I am not in a position to furnish the figures asked for by the hon. Member, and it would be a work of time and trouble to obtain them from different parts of the country. I may say, however, that the total number of orders for summary jurisdiction made during the last three years was:—In 1887, 3,868; in 1888, 4,022; and in 1889, 3,819. The number of cases administered by Official Receivers and closed during 1889 was 3,814; of these the number in which the assets realised *less* than £300 was 3,643. The number in which they realised *more* than £300 was 141. In 58 of the latter cases the debtors had themselves estimated that the estates were worth less than £300, although the Official Receivers realised more. I cannot admit that Official Receivers are in the habit of under-estimating the value of debtors' estates, but in many cases the estimates of debtors as to the probable value of the assets are quite untrustworthy, and the Official Receivers are compelled to form their own judgment as to their actual value.

THE STATISTICAL DEPARTMENT OF THE CUSTOMS.

MR. KELLY: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether any further definite progress has been made in the re-organisation of the Statistical Department of the Customs; and whether, seeing that this question has occupied the attention of the Treasury now for nearly three years, he can state precisely when a permanent settlement of the question may be expected?

MR. JACKSON: I do not admit the accuracy of the statements in the question of my hon. Friend. The final Report of the Customs reached the Treasury only a short time ago. The question is now being considered, and I am not able to fix any precise date for the decision.

MR. KELLY: Will the decision be given in one month or in three?

MR. JACKSON: I cannot say.

PETITIONS OF RIGHT.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the Attorney General if he has refused to give his fiat to Petitions of Right presented by officers who have been deprived of the advantages promised them by different warrants, and which have been withdrawn by the Secretary of State for War and by the India Office?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I do not understand the question of the hon. Member. Every application for leave to present a Petition of Right is considered upon its merits, and, as far as I am aware, in no case has such leave been refused under the circumstances suggested by the hon. Member.

THE CORONER FOR NORTH TYRONE.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. M'Crea, who now holds the appointment of Coroner for North Tyrone, is also a Sub-Commissioner under the Land Act; and whether Mr. M'Crea for three-and-a-half years has been habitually absent from his district, and has presided at only one inquest?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The reply to the inquiry in the first paragraph is in the affirmative. By a personal arrangement inquests in Mr. M'Crea's district have been held by the Coroner for Mid Tyrone since August, 1887, when Mr. M'Crea was appointed an Assistant Land Commissioner.

PRISON CLERKS.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Report of the Departmental Committee, inquiring into the complaints of clerks serving in Her Majesty's prisons, has yet been issued; and, if so, when the clerks in question will be made acquainted with its contents?

Mr. MATTHEWS: The Departmental Committee have promised the Report referred to in a few days, and it will, in due course, be communicated to the clerks in question.

THE COURSE OF BUSINESS.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Is it intended to proceed with the Tithe Bill from day to day?

Mr. GOSCHEN: The Government will not proceed with the Tithe Bill from day to day. The course of business we propose is this: If Mr. Speaker leaves the Chair on the Tithe Bill this evening, we shall proceed with the Education Vote to-morrow, and we hope to get it in sufficient time to enable us to take the Report of the Diplomatic and Consular Vote, which we hope to bring on about half-past 10 o'clock for the convenience of the House generally; then on Monday we intend to proceed with the Irish Land Purchase Bill. With regard to the Western Australia Bill, which is down for Monday, the Government are perfectly aware of the great importance of proceeding with it, and they will endeavour to make some arrangement for doing so which will be satisfactory.

*Mr. CHILDERS: Will it be the first Order for Monday?

Mr. GOSCHEN: No; it will not be the first Order.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: Can the right hon. Gentleman say when the Employers' Liability Bill will be taken?

Mr. GOSCHEN: No decision has been come to.

Sir W. HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman says the Irish Land Purchase Bill will be taken on Monday. Are we to understand that it will be proceeded with continuously, and that the Tithe Bill and the Publicans' Compensation Bill will not be proceeded with until the Irish Land Purchase Bill is disposed of?

Mr. GOSCHEN: Certainly not; that will be a totally erroneous inference.

Sir G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): Will the right hon. Gentleman say is there any intention to take the Barracks Bill to-night, and if notice will be given of the intention to take it?

Mr. GOSCHEN: It will not be taken to-night, and notice will be given when it is to be taken.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): There are two questions I should like to have answered, first, after what hour will the Government agree not to take the Report stage of Supply voted on April 14; and also can the right hon. Gentleman give us any information as to the time when it is proposed to take the Private Bill Procedure (Scotland) Bill?

Mr. GOSCHEN: As to the second question, I am not now able to make any statement. As to the first question, I hope after the discussion we had the other evening the Vote will be agreed to by half-past 10, and it will then be possible to take the Report of the Diplomatic and Consular Vote. That arrangement will, I hope, be satisfactory to hon. Gentlemen who have matters to discuss, though we have no desire to insist on the arrangement.

Mr. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): Will the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board say when the Housing of the Working Classes Bill will be circulated?

*Mr. RITCHIE: I hope within the next few days.

Mr. SEXTON: It may perhaps appease Irish Members, who have been somewhat taken by surprise, if the Government will say if they have made up their mind as to how long they will proceed with the Land Purchase Bill, whether they have in view any definite period, or whether it is likely to be dropped at any time?

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): Have the Government yet arrived at any conclusion as to what Bills they intend to proceed with?

MR. GOSCHEN: It may be for the convenience of hon. Members to know that we intend to proceed with the Irish Land Purchase Bill until we get the Speaker out of the Chair. I cannot make any statement as to the further stages of the Bill.

LOCAL TAXATION.

MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): Can the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board say when we shall have the Paper showing the division of money under the Local Taxation Accounts for the year ending March 31?

*MR. RITCHIE: I received yesterday some accounts from the Treasury; but I am not quite certain whether they are final, so as to enable me to distribute the Paper, but no time shall be lost.

HOLYHEAD HARBOUR.

Copy ordered—

"Of Correspondence between the London and North Western Railway Company and the Board of Trade respecting the construction of a deep-water pier and the removal of the Platters Rocks in Holyhead Harbour."—(*Mr. Kenyon.*)

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

John Roche, esquire, for County of Galway (East Galway Division); James Joseph Dalton, esquire, West Donegal Division of the County of Donegal.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

TITHE RENT-CHARGE RECOVERY AND REDEMPTION BILL—(No. 169.)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

*(5.40.) MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): The Instruction I have to move is based on the general principle that if by a measure of this description you confer certain tangible benefits on tithe owners, you are bound, as an act of justice and as compensation, to confer benefits of a corresponding nature on the payers of tithe, especially if it can be shown that certain grievances, certain hardships, are suffered by individual payers. After consultation with you, Sir, I am to some extent restricted in the scope of what it was my intention to say, and I shall confine myself to two specific points, the question of corn averages, a most important question in the whole subject of revision, and another portion of the question which in a few minutes it will be my duty to explain, and my endeavour to devise a remedy for when we are dealing with the special rateable value clauses. My Instruction does not in any way affect the theory of tithe, whether we regard it as National property or not. If it is regarded as national property there is the more reason why the Instruction should be carried, for if it can be shown that tithe presses with unfairness upon particular individuals, although it can be shown that the nation has a certain property in the tithe or, as the President of the Board of Trade said, a reversionary interest, yet it cannot be said that a national right must needs be an individual wrong. There is no reason why the nation should exact more than it is entitled to. Crown lands may be regarded as national property, the rents going to what may be described as national purposes, yet, in bad times, and when seasons are unfavourable, those rents may be and are reduced, but by that reduction the right of the State to the rent of Crown lands is in no way impaired. So also with tithe; if Parliament decides that in certain cases the amount of tithe should be raised, should be increased or reduced, the decision of Parliament in no way affects the theory of tithe itself. The Instruction deals with one particular and specific point, that is, in the Bill before the House you endeavour to re-open the settlement of 1836; it is the bounden duty of the House not to re-open that settlement in the interest of one party only, especially bearing in mind the conditions upon which the Settlement of 1836 was based. Opinions in reference to that Settlement, at the time it was arrived at, were expressed on both sides of the House in the strongest manner by Lord J. Russell, as well as Sir Robert Peel, that one of the objects in view in the Settlement was to

remove restrictions under which agriculture was placed. If it can be shown that, owing to errors made in that settlement, owing to imperfect realisation of the conditions then existing, or which might afterwards arise, mistakes were made on considerations left out of sight; if, owing to such oversights, it can be shown that those interested in agriculture — landlords, farmers, or labourers — have suffered, and are suffering, owing to the existing state of the Tithe Law, as fixed in 1836, then it seems to me there is a clear case, on the showing of those who endeavoured to bring about a settlement, that there should be a revision of the whole question in the interest of all the parties to the settlement, not of one party only. If we look at the conditions of the Settlement of 1836, we find two conditions that do not now exist; there were high prices and cheap labour; these were the dominant features of the situation then, but exactly the reverse is the position now. Not only has a great diminution in prices taken place since that date, but we have no reason to suppose, although there may be temporary revivals in agriculture, there will ever be any reversion to anything approaching the prices that ruled in 1836. The fall has been due not to the action of Parliament but to the opening of new methods of transit, especially since 1846, when the price of wheat was 56s. a quarter. Wheat now realises less than half that price, and with the imports from the United States, from Russia, and, above all, from India, and with each successive year bringing improvements in the means of transport, there is no reason to suppose that for any considerable time prices will ever be higher. Temporary or accidental causes may bring about a rise, but we cannot expect it will be permanent. That being the case, how do we find the condition of agriculture affected by this very serious burden imposed upon the land? If we look at the condition of agriculture now, and compare it with what it was, we see the great changes brought about by economic and other causes during the last 50 years. It is only a few years ago Sir James Caird declared—and I suppose he will be considered an authority upon agricultural matters—that it would require £10,000,000 to make the land as clean now as it was 50 years ago. This is a serious condition of things, affecting not only owners and occupiers, but all connected directly or indirectly with the cultivation of the soil. Above all, it affects that class we all desire to see more numerous, the class of yeoman farmers, once the pride of England. One thing is perfectly certain, this class can never become so numerous as once they were, unless this heavy burden is lightened. With the fall in the price of produce the cost of labour has increased, a condition of things exactly the reverse under which the Settlement of 1836 was arrived at. Even in 1836 there was a considerable body of opinion in the country which declared that the Settlement was in the interest of tithe owners rather than of tithepayers, and reference to the Debates of that time show that the opinion found expression both among Members of the Conservative Party as well as among the Whigs, and one of the most remarkable expressions of opinion in that direction came from that Radical among Radicals, Joseph Hume, one of the last men who would have been disposed to fritter away any tithe which he regarded as national property. On more than one occasion Joseph Hume declared that no good Bill could be enacted until the Corn Laws were repealed, for they had given land and its produce an artificial value, and, anticipating the repeal of the Corn Laws, he declared that great injury would be inflicted on owners until the value of the tithe was fixed much lower than it was by the Bill then before the House. The only importance of this opinion is as coming from such a Radical Member, who might have been expected to express a view of quite a different character. It shows most clearly that even then there was an opinion that the Act of 1836 was an imperfect settlement, in the interest of the tithe owners, and not of the tithepayer. In individual cases we find that hardships are very severe indeed. As a Member from the Eastern Counties, I can speak feelingly, because a quarter of the whole tithe in England is paid in the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, and Kent. These counties pay £1,000,000 out of the whole £4,000,000. The grievance is not confined to this part of England; it is spread over a large area; it exists largely in Wales; it is to be found in Berks, Dorset, and other parts of the Kingdom; but I think representatives from the Eastern Counties are especially entitled to urge this grievance and to seek redress, and we claim that if the Settlement of 1836 is re-opened it should not be in the interest of one party only. Let me give the result of calculations that have been made in reference to Berkshire. Here is a computation referring to 26 farms in that county, and these farms comprise 13,000 acres. The rent derived from these 13,000 acres is £2,500, but the amount of tithe derived is £3,000. Can it be conceived that it is consistent with equity, though it may be in accordance with actual law, that a tithe 1-10th should actually become 1 1-6th, that is to say, that for every 5s. of rent there should be paid 6s. in tithe? It appears to me to be a monstrous state of things, and all the more so if we look at what the tithe was really intended to be. I do not want to enter into any disquisition as to the meaning of the tithe, but etymologically it means 1-10th of the produce, and what is more it was not intended to be 1-10th of the produce developed by artificial means, but 1-10th of the produce nature actually gives; it was not intended to include 1-10th of the produce brought about by artificial means, artificial manures, and the application of all capital. You might as well exact tithe from ship owners and others engaged in industrial pursuits. Surely in the beginning it was intended that the tithe should be 1-10th of Nature's yield. As a matter of fact, it is very much the reverse of this. Experiments carried out by Sir John Lawes show the difference between the natural and the artificial produce. Sir John Lawes, by the experiments upon his model farm, has shown conclusively that in the case of wheat the natural produce is eight or nine bushels to the acre, whereas, as a matter of fact, the average yield obtained is 28 or 30 bushels. The difference between eight bushels and 28 is due to the application of capital under modern conditions of farming, and so far as the tithe as the tenth of Nature's gift is concerned, should not be taken into account. I do not dwell on that; my contention is that the settlement of 1836 presses unfairly in many cases, and in this revision a more equitable distribution of the burden is called for. From the theological conception of the tithe, it may be shown the tithe should be less. I do not endorse that view, but I take it that those who adopt the high theological ground of tithe should logically follow it out. We find in the countries I have mentioned, and elsewhere, there are these grievances, but in what way does the Bill meet them? All it does is to transfer payments from tenants to owners.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must address himself to the specific Instruction and matters cognate thereto.

*MR. F. S. STEVENSON: I simply, Sir, wish to point out that my objection is based on the ground that in the Bill certain advantages are conferred upon owners of tithe, and that we are bound in duty and equity to confer corresponding advantages to payers of tithes.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member's remarks were rather relative to a Second Reading Debate than to the specific points of his Instruction.

*MR. F. S. STEVENSON: The only means of redress for the grievances I complain of, the specific points for the relief of land owners, tenants, yeomen, and labourers, would be in dealing with the question of corn averages, and bringing about some solution of the difficulty by some special arrangement in relation to the special rateable value clauses. The only way in which relief can be given to the tithepayer, in addition to the revision of the corn averages, is by introducing some means whereby he could obtain redress in the County Court, or before some other tribunal. The specific manner in which this, in our opinion, should be carried out it would be our duty to indicate by Amendments in Committee in the event of this Instruction being accepted. With regard to corn averages, that is a question upon which the House has been able to express its opinion, partly in Debate itself and partly through Committees. The question of corn averages has been the subject of a Committee's Report, and there is no adequate reason for not dealing with the question in a Bill which revises the Settlement of 1836. Of course, corn averages is a much older question than the Tithe Commutation

Act of 1836, and but for the question of tithe the question of corn averages would have but little interest for people in the rural districts. The question of tithes and the question of corn averages are inseparable, and Chambers of Agriculture all over the country have passed resolutions with reference to the latter question. One of the most serious grievances of the tithepayers would be removed if the question of corn averages were dealt with. I will not endeavour now to deal with all the grievances that arise from the present method of taking the average. There arises the question of the cost of transit, and another grievance arises from the fact that whereas in former times when prices were high a farmer sent all his corn to market, and the average was taken over all qualities, he now sends only the very best samples, and upon the corn which fetches the highest price the average is taken. Again, there are grievances connected with the practice of taking a septennial average. I admit the objections to an annual assessment, but I do not see any valid reason why it should not be possible to take a triennial average. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade will give us some explanation why it is impossible to deal with this question in the Bill, which, in the opinion of a large portion of the Committee and of many witnesses who gave evidence before that Committee, is closely and indissolubly connected with the question of tithe, and cannot be left out in a solution of the great problem raised. Last year there were Amendments proposed by the Government which seemed to go in the same direction as my Instruction indicates. The Amendments proposed by the Attorney General then showed some intention towards a certain amount of fairness as between tithe owners and tithepayers. I do not say they quite met the fair demands of the situation, but they offered far more than can be effected under the special rateable value clauses of the present Bill. One of the Amendments last year provided that the Court might, upon being satisfied on evidence, make an order for remission of tithe charge, and prevent the total amount exceeding the proceeds from the land. This covered a certain portion of the ground occupied by my Instruction, but I look through the Bill in vain for anything having a like result. The rateable clauses will, in the opinion of those most competent to judge, prove inoperative in this regard. The new rent will, after the passing of this Bill, be simply the old rent, plus the amount paid as tithe rent-charge, and upon this will be computed the new special rateable value. It is practically impossible in 999 cases in a thousand for the tithe rent-charge, under the circumstances, to exceed the special rateable value. Therefore, to that extent, unless the clauses are amended, they will not meet the necessities of the case, and certainly will not do so to the extent of the proposals in the amended Bill of last year. On these grounds I move the Instruction of which I have given notice, and I have only been able to specify two points, for I am afraid I should not be in order if I went beyond. In moving the Instruction, I wish to point out that it is in no way an attack upon the general principle and theory of tithes; it merely implies that the question should not be dealt with in the interests of one party only. I do not mean to say that tithe owners have not suffered, but I say the question should be looked at as a whole, and the interests of all connected with agriculture should be regarded in these new proposals. Looking at the historical origin of the Act of 1836, and the conditions that have since arisen, I say it is high time to revise the Settlement, and in doing so to hold the balance equally between all parties.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to provide for an equitable revision of tithes, in accordance with the altered conditions of agriculture."—(*Mr. F. S. Stevenson.*)

*(6.10.) Mr. ARTHUR WILLIAMS (Glamorgan, S.): It becomes my duty to second the Motion, you, Sir, having, as I understand, given your ruling to the effect that the terms of the Motion I have put upon the Paper are included in the Motion of my hon. Friend. Let me say at once, as expressing the view of the people of Wales, that we have not the least wish to fritter away the tithe, or to deal with it in such a way that there shall be a permanent reduction in it as a national property, the reduction passing

into the hands of land owners. The people look to see this permanent property pass under the control of County Councils, and are not less jealous of its preservation than other members of the community. With this reservation, I certainly concur in the terms of the Resolution. The bargain of 1836 has been broken. The present Government have, within the past two years, made several attempts to break the Settlement of 1836; and the Welsh people are entitled to say, if this Settlement is to be broken, that it should be done with a due regard to every interest concerned, and by an equitable re-arrangement of the whole scheme. I do not suggest the direction in which you should proceed, but it is obvious to those who have given but a superficial study to this complicated subject, and perhaps I can claim no more, that if the bargain of 1836 once becomes to be tampered with, that involves a re-adjustment of it as a whole. Such is the scope and object of this Instruction. If you are going to transfer to landowners the immediate and primary duty no doubt intended by the Act of 1836 to pay tithe to the tithe owners making it compulsory, then surely you are invading the fundamental principle of the Act of 1836, and I hope we shall find before the Committee has finished its labours, as we have found Session after Session, that you have not approached the question in a thorough and statesmanlike manner, and if on either side Members are true to their obligations it will be found that no ingenious draftsmanship can evade the futile, unjust, and altogether unsatisfactory character of the Bill as it now stands. I will not trouble the House by again traversing the ground I went over last year, but I wish to show that support to the Instruction is quite consistent with the principle of keeping this great national property intact. We wish to relieve the undue pressure of the burden on the struggling farmer. However it may appear on the face of the Bill as the result of the transfer of payment from tenant to owner, the fluctuating value must press eventually upon the tenant, for he will have to pay the tithe in his rent. Take a small tenant farmer in Wales—I am within the mark when I say that, even assuming that the object and motive of the Bill to be what they appear—there will still, as the Bill stands, be a pressure upon the tenant, because he will not have that claim to an abatement of rent, which I am glad to say he now gets in bad times, in proportion to the amount of his rent, because the tithe will still have to be paid. When we come to deal with the clauses referring to special rateable value, I think I shall be able to show that whatever is done for the relief of the landlord, the tenant farmer will get precious little out of that provision of the Bill. I showed last Session that, taking the whole of Wales, the due proportion of relief to tenant farmers should be £30,000 a year. That does not mean a loss to the country; it simply means the proportion of fall or rise in proportion to the condition of agriculture. Perhaps a single figure will have as much influence as long argument, and I have no wish to occupy time. If a fair reduction were made in the tithe rent-charge throughout the Kingdom, that would amount to nearly £500,000, and to that extent would tenant farmers in various parts of the country be relieved. I ask hon. Members on either side to act up to their convictions in this matter and to support the Instruction and reasonable claim made by my hon. Friend.

Mr. Arthur Williams

*(6.20.) THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The terms of the Motion of the hon. Member are very wide. I was curious when I saw the Instruction on the Paper to know in what way it was to be carried out. When the hon. Member came to consider what that Instruction really involves, he must have been frightened at the figure he had created. The hon. Gentleman has not attempted to make a speech in support of the Instruction itself: he has devoted his remarks mainly to other objects. There were, however, certain survivals in the speech that led me to think the hon. Member had intended something much larger when he placed this Instruction on the Paper. The hon. Member said he wanted a large and comprehensive re-arrangement so that the tithe should press less hardly on individuals and be more equally distributed than it is at present. Consequently, he must have had in his mind not merely a reduction of tithe in cases of hardship, but also an

increase in the tithe where the land on which it is levied has increased in value since the tithe rent-charge was fixed. I do not think, however, that any hon. Member would seriously propose a measure for increasing the tithe in defiance of the principle of the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836. I think that what the hon. Gentleman really wants is some method of dealing with what are known as "hard cases." Indeed, the hon. Gentleman suggested two definite ways in which that subject might be dealt with. First of all, he referred to the question of corn averages. That may be considered under two aspects. In the first place, there is the question whether the average should be taken over seven years or over three years or even a less extended term. To my mind, it is a matter of comparatively small importance what number of years is fixed. There is this advantage in a septennial average, namely, that it makes the payment less fluctuating, and that is an advantage to both parties in the end. I believe it would require no Instruction whatever for the Committee on this Bill to introduce, if they should think fit, a clause substituting a triennial for a septennial average. Consequently, I turn to the mode of making the Returns from which the averages are taken. That is a complicated subject. It was considered two years ago by a Select Committeee, which reported against any change in the existing system in the direction that the hon. Member desires. It was proposed by several witnesses that unmarketed corn should be taken into calculation in estimating prices, but I confess I do not see how this is to be done. It is not merely a question of tail or inferior corn, for many farmers prefer to use their best corn for their stock, because it pays them better to do so than to send it to market at the prices they would obtain. Some witnesses also proposed that only first hand sales should be taken into calculation. But if either of these proposals were adopted, it would amount to such a re-opening of the system that the tithe owner would have a right to ask that it should be also considered whether the average should not be taken from the prices of other agricultural produce besides wheat, barley, and oats. The system of taking wheat, barley, and oats in equal proportion was adopted in 1836, because it was considered that a less fluctuating average would be thus obtained than by giving a greater preponderance to any one of the three kinds of grain. Certainly, it has been proved by experience that that view was correct. That is my reply to that part of the observations of hon. Gentlemen opposite relating to corn averages. Now, let me go on to the second topic as to which hon. Gentlemen desire to see some change. The hon. Member for Suffolk said he wanted to see some more practical solution of the difficulty of dealing with those "hard cases" to which he referred—cases where the value of land has deteriorated, since 1836, more than the value of the tithe. He wanted to see some more satisfactory solution of the case than is to be found in the special rateable value clauses—something more in the nature of the net profit proposal comprised in the Amendment placed on the Paper by the Attorney General last year. But I may say there is actually an Amendment on the Paper now, in the name of the hon. Member for Glamorganshire, to substitute a calculation of net profits for rateable value. I apprehend that it is unnecessary, therefore, for any Instruction to be moved in order to permit such an Amendment as is desired by the hon. Member to be brought forward. I would submit to the hon. Member for Suffolk that this matter could be debated under the powers the Committee at present possess. Again, there is an Amendment on the Paper suggesting that not the whole of the special rateable value should be considered, but that the tithe should never exceed a certain proportion of it—half, or something of that kind. I do not wish the House to think that I cannot defend the proposals of the Bill as preferable to any of the suggestions brought forward; all I maintain now is that it will be competent for hon. Members to raise in Committee any question they please as to substituting a calculation of net profits for a special rateable value. So far, therefore, as this proposal is concerned, the Instruction is entirely unnecessary, and I trust the House will not be put to the trouble of a Division.

(6.35.) MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden): The object of the Instruction is, as I suppose, to meet the case of tithepayers who may be in any way injured by the Bill, and I desire to support it because I consider that the interest of the tithepayer has been decidedly neglected by the Government. If I had had any doubts as to the necessity of doing so on this occasion, they would have been entirely dispelled by the speech of the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade, because he twitted the Mover and Seconder of this Instruction with inconsistency, and said that no one would be bold enough to propose a general revision of tithes. Why, Sir, as I understand the Bill, that is exactly what the Government propose on the present occasion. They propose in this measure a general alteration of the Act of 1836 in the interest of the tithe owner, and of the tithe owner only.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: What I said was, that no one would be bold enough to propose an increase of the tithe.

MR. H. GARDNER: I accept the right hon. Baronet's statement, but certainly, at the time, I must have misunderstood him. In arguing the case of the corn averages the right hon. Baronet went on to say that if certain proposals made before the Committee, of which I had the honour to be a member as well as himself, had been carried, the result would have been to reduce the value of the tithe owner's property; and from that he went on to say that the tithe owner would, of necessity, have demanded that the whole question of corn averages should be inquired into. That I take to be the position taken up to-day with regard to the Bill of the Government. They have broken the Act of 1836 in the interests of the tithe owners, and have entirely neglected the interests of the tithepayers. Therefore, if I had had any doubts as to the value of the Instruction of my hon. Friend, they would have been entirely removed by the speech of the right hon. Baronet. I will endeavour, as far as possible, to keep within your ruling, Sir; but it is difficult to support the Instruction without pointing out the evils of the Bill which it is desired to get rid of. I agree—and I am sure hon. Members on this side generally agree—that tithe is national property though not in the sense in which the President of the Board of Trade referred to it in his speech on the Second Reading of the Bill. I have heard a good deal said about frittering away the tithe, and I am certain that the hon. Member for South Glamorganshire, for moving the Instruction, will be accused of a desire to fritter away the tithe. For my part, I am as little anxious to fritter away the tithe as anyone in the Kingdom, and it is for that reason that I support the Instruction of my hon. Friend. There can be no better means of frittering away tithe than doing away with it altogether, and that must come about in the future unless some such Instruction as this is agreed to. It is well-known that where high prices for corn prevail much heath land is broken up and made arable. The Tithe Commutation Act of 1836 caught these poorer lands such as have been referred to in the Eastern Counties, and threw upon them the burden of an excessive tithe. Either that excessive tithe must be removed from the land or it will be allowed to go out of cultivation, as it is now doing in many instances. I will not weary the House by referring to those instances where land is so fully tithed that it is impossible to cultivate it with profit. But I would appeal to hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, especially to country gentlemen and the friends of the farmers, to support my hon. Friend's Motion for another reason: and that is, that it was laid down in 1836 that one of the reasons why the Tithe Commutation Act of that date was passed was that there should be nothing to prevent capital being invested in land. There is not a single country gentleman or Member representing an agricultural constituency here who will not agree that in many cases tithe is paid out of the capital that has been brought into the land since the passing of the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836. The object which those who support this Instruction have in view is the same as that of a Petition which was presented to the House in August, 1885, by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture. The right hon. Gentleman presented it, not as Member for Lincolnshire, but in virtue of the justly respected position which he holds in the agricultural world. That Petition advocated the repeal of the Tithe Commutation Act—the sacred covenant which the Instruction of my hon. Friend is supposed to attack. I hope that the right hon. Gentleman still maintains the opinions professed by him in the capacity in which he presented that Petition. I think that, as the Board of Agriculture is very much mixed up with the working of this Bill, the opinions of the right hon. Gentleman the President of that Board (Mr. Chaplin) will be of extreme value to the House, and I trust we shall have an opportunity of hearing them this evening. The Prime Minister, a few years ago, speaking of the re-valuation of tithe, stated that the revision could not be maintained by the Tory Party, because it was a matter of confiscation. I grant it would be a matter of confiscation if it could be proved that tithe rent-charge is in the form of a mortgage. It is not in the form of a mortgage. There has been no principal sum lent on which interest is paid. On the other hand, the principle of revision has always been regarded as pertaining to tithes. Before the Act of 1836 Nature herself made the adjustment, because when the crops were poor it is obvious no tithe could be obtained from the land. The principle was certainly admitted by the Act of 1836 in reference to the fluctuation in the septennial averages. I cannot, therefore, see that if this Instruction were carried out it would in any way injure the tithe rent-charge or go beyond the Act of 1836. I believe that in Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk alone something like one-fifth of the whole tithe is paid, and it is therefore natural that we Eastern Counties Representatives should endeavour to force what we consider the just claims of our constituents in the House. All we ask for is a fair tithe, and that fair tithe would, in my opinion, be secured by the adoption of this Instruction.

*(6.48.) Viscount CRANBORNE (Lancashire, N.E., Darwen): This Instruction is proposed on the ground that the present law is inequitable. I should like to ask to whom is the law inequitable? I am bound to say that, as far as the present Bill is concerned, the charge cannot be sustained that it is inequitable to the farmer. The elaborate provisions of Clause 2 are very skilfully designed to prevent the extreme hardship to farmers to which attention has been called. Under that clause it would be quite impossible for the legitimate profit of the farmer to be touched for tithe rent-charge. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has declared that by the Act of 1836 the principle that tithe was adjustable was recognised by Parliament. Under that Act, certainly, the tithe was adjusted; but it was adjusted once for all, and it was intended that it should ever afterwards remain fixed. It would be perfectly easy, by quotations from the speeches of Lord John Russell and others to prove that this was the intention at the time. The only variation permitted was with reference to the corn averages, and this was allowed, because it was thought that a much more fixed and constant income would be given to the clery by consenting to such a variation. I should like to read a single quotation from the Report of the Poor Law Board in 1843, signed by Sir G. Cornwall Lewis, who was, I think, in Parliament at the time of the passing of the Tithe Commutation Act. The Report says—

> "It was quite clearly understood at that time that there was to be assured to the tithe owners an income as nearly as possible equivalent in real value to their then revenue, to be rendered by the provisions as to averages, independent, as far as possible, even of the fluctuations in the value of money. With this assurance of a certain revenue, the tithe owner abandoned his prospect of increased revenue from improving cultivation and rising prices of produce."

I do not believe that the tithe rent-charge was more than 60 per cent. of the gross value of the tithe when the Act of 1836 was passed. It has been said that, since the passage of the Act of 1836, Free Trade has been established, and that, as, the result, the price of corn has greatly diminished. I should, however, be surprised to hear hon. Gentlemen opposite, who, if they are nothing else, are Free Traders, assert that the farmers have suffered, and the land has suffered, by the repeal of the Corn Laws. I should very gravely doubt whether the profit made by the landed interest, since the repeal of the Corn Laws, did not exceed any loss they may have sustained owing to the decrease in the price of corn. I claim to be a Free Trader myself, and I have every reason to believe that what I say on this point is perfectly accurate. I should like to make one other quotation. The name of Sir James

Caird has been referred to, and I should like to quote one sentence from the evidence given by him before a Committee which sat in 1881. He was asked—

> "Do you adhere to what you said, that if the old right of participation had continued with regard to tithe the annual income of the Church would now have been £2,000,000 greater than it is, and the whole of the difference has gone?"

Sir James Caird answered: "So far as I know, I do not know where else the difference can have gone." So that positively, according to Sir James Caird, the tithe in 1881 would have been half as much again if the Act had not passed and the extra profit had gone into the pockets of the landowners. I do not believe the landowners are sufficiently dishonest to want to break the bargain made in their favour; but there are certain persons who wish to still further diminish the income of the clergy and still further enrich the landed interest. I cannot admit that the present law or the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman would be in the least inequitable except to the owners of tithe. Having regard to the considerations I have tried to place before the House, we cannot look at any Amendment which is designed either by altered methods of taxing the corn averages or in any other way to diminish revenue which has already been diminished too far. This must be the position held by the vast body of Members on the other side of the House. They tell us that tithe is national property, and they will not see it frittered away. That being so, they are obviously bound to vote with my right hon. Friend against this Instruction.

(7.0.) MR. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon): I wish, in the first place, to say a word or two in reference to the speech which has just been made by the noble Lord. I may as well say frankly and honestly that there were not six words in that speech with which I was able to agree. The noble Lord told us, on the authority of Sir James Caird, that tithe owners had given up £2,000,000 annually, or rather had lost it, by the bargain of 1836. I have never seen that statement proved, though I have read it over and over again; and I am sure the noble Lord will forgive me for saying that he did not attempt to prove it. What we want to get the House of Commons and the country to realise is the terribly bad position of those landlords and yeomen farmers in the Eastern Counties and other parts of England where tithe rent-charge frequently represents either the whole, or nearly the whole, annual income from the land. I am glad that, in spite of some of the articles we have seen in Radical papers, there are Members on the opposite side of the House who are willing that the difficulties I refer to should be fairly recognised provided that we do not touch the corpus of the tithe itself. On this condition I believe they will listen to reasonable proposals for the temporary relief of those extreme cases to which attention is being called; and I hope that before the Bill is passed we may make it a measure that will not only be acceptable to the tithe owners but fair to the tithepayers. I wish to draw the attention of the noble Lord (Viscount Cranborne) to the fact that if the law as it existed before the passing of the Tithe Act of 1836 had now been in operation, it would have been perfectly unnecessary for me to be now taking up the time of the House in trying to drive home the extreme grievances of the tenant farmers. If that Act were now in operation I could—not by cutting off my nose to spite my face or *vice versâ*, but in a rational way—prevent the tithe owner from getting money from the land at all. Before the passing of the Commutation Act the tithe owner had a tenth of the corn and a tenth of the lambs and calves born on the farm, but he had no share whatever in the stock bought and placed on the farm. A farmer could, therefore, lay his arable lands down for grass, and had the Act of 1836 not been passed tens of thousands of acres of land in Essex that have not made one sou in late years out of corn production would have been laid down for grass. We could have so manipulated our farming operations that the tithe would have been *nil*. How about that great sum of money which the tithe owners have lost by the bargain of 1836? This land has been paying 5s. or 6s. per acre in tithe during these years of depression, and I hope that when we touch a certain point in Committee the House will look at the subject in a fair and equitable manner. As long as it is not proposed to touch the corpus of the tithe I am sanguine we shall get some relief, if it is only of a temporary nature, for these extraordinary cases. One word in reference to what is called the corn averages. I regret that the President of the Board of Trade has skated so lightly over that question. That is a very important question, and I think it would be well if the House were asked to deal with it in this Bill. I was one of the Committee who inquired into the question, and I know perfectly well that a majority of that Committee did not seem very much inclined to recommend any great re-opening of the corn average question. But I know there were practical men on the Committee who most anxiously desired a re-opening of the question; and I know there are thousands of agriculturists in the country who think that the tithe question will never be satisfactorily or fairly settled until that part of the subject is re-opened. It is an undoubted fact that about the period of the passing of the Commutation Act there was sold a great deal of cheap corn, which is now consumed at home. That class of corn does not now, therefore, have the effect of lowering the market price as it ought to have. Years ago, before our villages were flooded with foreign corn, the inferior corn was of great marketable value. When there was a bad harvest nearly all the wheat had to go to market, but now there is a different state of things. Only the finest description of wheat is now thought fit to make into flour. With regard to the question of re-sale, it is a fact that corn is now sold 10 times over as compared with the number of times it was sold 40 or 50 years ago. At that time it was a matter of great expense for the middleman to travel about from market to market, whereas it is entirely different now; and a great deal is done in the way of re-sale, and as re-sales go on naturally the price of the corn keeps increasing. The farmer sells it to a dealer, who sells it to a third person, who "bulks" it, and then sells a large quantity at Mark Lane; and each time the corn is sold the price finds its way into the corn average, which is thus made higher than the price which the farmer gets for his corn. The question of the corn average is, no doubt, a difficult one, and I do not wonder that the President of the Board of Trade would gladly escape the difficult task of re-opening it; but it is a question that ought to be settled in a statesmanlike way. However, if I talked for half an hour longer on the subject I do not suppose I should get any nearer the point I am driving at. I think the corn average question ought to be taken into consideration before the Bill is finally disposed of, and if there is a Division on the question I shall have much pleasure in voting for the Instruction. Of course, what I am aiming at is to get relief. I am trying to whittle down the tithe temporarily, and in a fair way, in those particularly hard cases upon which I have already touched to-night.

(7.18.) MR. H. FARQUHARSON (Dorset, W.): I am almost ashamed to address the House after the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Darwen (Viscount Cranborne), because if he is right I must be entirely wrong. As I understand it, it is the tithe owner and not the tithe-payer who is re-opening this question. I do not know whether it will be a surprise to the noble Lord to hear that if you add 4 per cent. whenever the tithe has been above par since the Commutation Act, and if you deduct 4 per cent. whenever it has been below par, you find that the tithe owner has for every £100 of tithe received £220. From that it does not seem that the tithe owner has lost. On the contrary, I believe the tithe owner has benefited enormously by the Commutation Act. The gross produce of agriculture at the present time is greater than at the time of the commutation; but in agriculture, as in other industries, with a larger produce the profits are now smaller, and I infer that if the tithe owner were to come down and demand one-tenth of the whole produce there would be such an outcry in the country that he would get nothing at all. As to the question of corn averages, I think the President of the Board of Trade admits that there is some little grievance. He tells us it is difficult to re-arrange the corn average. I dare say it is, and, from my point of view, it is not actually necessary to re-arrange it. I think the Government might strike an average, as it were, and say, "We will give you 5 or 10 or 20 per cent. reduction." I think the matter could easily be met by some concession being made on the principle of a general average. Then the right hon. Gentleman said that the tithepayer must remember that if the tithe were taken on beef and wool in addition to corn, the tithepayer would suffer very much. I am well aware of that; but it does seem to me that if the tithepayers cannot afford to pay tithe on corn, which has fallen so much in value, they could not pay it on wool and beef. That, I think, points to the conclusion that the tithe owners are getting more than they really ought to have. But the point I am most anxious about is the enormous loss the tithepayers have incurred by the Commutation Act in the matter of rates. When the Commutation Act was passed the old Poor Law had only just been abolished, and at that time rates were in some cases 18s. and 20s. in the £1. What the tithe owner was to receive was based on the price of corn for the last seven years, and then the amount of rates payable by him for the future was added. In the Library are the Reports of the Tithe Commissioners. In one column one sees the tithe for compensation, and in the next the amount added for rates. In some cases where the amount of tithe was £500, one sees that £300 was added in order to enable the tithe owner to pay the rates in future. I have two instances here. One is that of a parish in Norfolk. In that instance, the tithe was £215, and the addition was £123, to enable the tithe owner to pay the poor rate, which was then 11s. 6d. in the £1. Last year the rate was only 2s. 1d., so that the tithepayer has to pay this enormous sum of £123 instead of £22. In the case of a parish in Hampshire, the tithe was £128, and to this £102 was added for rates. At that time the rates were 16s. in the £1; last year the rate was only 2s. 7d., making £16 instead of £102. I maintain that the tithepayers have a right to come to the Government and demand justice in this respect. The tithe owner should only receive precisely what he is called upon to pay in the way of rates, besides a fair amount of tithe. This would be a great relief in Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex. Where the tithe is found to be so oppressive is just where the poor rates are so enormously high. I quite agree that the tithe owner must live; but the tithe owner must not live upon one class of the community only. If the Government neglect the case of the tithepayer they will be neglecting the best interests of the Church, because nothing adds more to the agitation against the Established Church than the idea that people are called upon to pay an unjust amount of tithe to the clergy of the Church of England. I hope that the Government will agree to the Instruction before the House.

*(7.28.) MR. SEALE-HAYNE (Devonshire, Ashburton): I understand the scope of this Instruction is now confined very much to the question of the grievances of the agricultural classes in respect to corn averages, and it is to that one point I propose to address myself. The President of the Board of Trade spoke just now of the Committee which sat two years ago, of which I had the honour to be a member, and which was appointed to deal with this question. The President of the Board of Trade has a very convenient memory with regard to what took place before the Committee. Before that Committee there was a universal complaint from farmers and agriculturists of the manner in which corn averages are taken. Then the right hon. Gentleman forgot to refer to the fact that, although our recommendations were small, nevertheless they were distinct on this point, that the provisions of the Act of 1882 should be more vigilantly enforced. Ample evidence came before the Committee to show that the officials charged with taking the corn averages did not fulfil their duty. And the Return obtained by the hon. Member for Shropshire, the right hon. Gentleman is perfectly well aware, shows that in many markets these averages are struck on an amount of dealing which is perfectly ridiculous, probably not more than 10 per cent. of the whole amount of dealing in some special cases. This is a cause of complaint in almost every agricultural meeting. Farmers feel most deeply upon this and other grievances. The method of taking corn averages is by no means a new question. It was dealt with by the Agricultural Commission, who reported in 1882. Of that Commission the Minister of Agriculture, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the President of the Local Government Board were members.

The Commissioners recommended that the tithe rent-charge should be a fixed sum, and that it should be paid by the landlord, and that every facility should be given for its redemption. In the Bill which the Government have introduced there is no attempt whatever to deal with the first and most important of these recommendations, and the grievances of the tithepayer are left entirely untouched. There is one special grievance which has not been mentioned. It is this: that the price upon which the corn average is taken is not the price which the farmer receives. I know that in my part of the country it is the practice of the farmers to sell their corn in the autumn at a low price to the agents who go round the country They sell it in order to get the money to pay their rent. That corn is sold in the market at an enhanced price. The consequence is the farmer has to pay more than his fair share under the present system of taking averages. The price also, it should be noticed, includes the cost of transit, warehousing, insurance, and merchant's profits. None of these things are part of the produce of the soil, and, as we all know, this additional cost was never contemplated by the tithepayer when the Tithe Commutation Act was passed, and I say they are manifestly unjust. For my part, I sincerely rejoice at the Government proposal, that landlords are in future to pay the tithe, because, if it passes, the tithe will have to be paid by the landlord out of his own pocket. When the landlord pays the money himself, and becomes aware of these grievances, he will begin to inquire to what purposes this tithe is applied, and he will find that it is applied to the purpose of the Established Church. I am confident that nothing which has been done, even by the Liberation Society, is more likely to bring about a speedy consideration of the question of the Disestablishment of the Church than this Bill. I disclaim any desire whatever to whittle down the tax. All I ask for on the part of the tithepayers is justice in the method of levying it. Whether the tithe is applied to the purposes of the Church or to secular purposes, or whether it is to be applied to education, are not at all questions before us; but of this I am confident, that to whatever purpose the tithe is applied, unless it is levied justly and fairly, so long will it be a subject of grievance on the part of the tithepayer. And those gentlemen who are anxious to keep up the value of tithe, for whatever purpose it may be, cannot do better than assist us in endeavouring to secure that that tithe shall be levied justly and fairly, and then I am confident that tithe property will be perfectly safe.

*(7.40.) Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Oswestry, Shropshire): I am sure we must all be willing that the suggestion of the hon. Member opposite, that this question should be dealt with in a scrupulous spirit of fairness, should be followed. My right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade put this crucial question to hon. Members, and not one of them attempted to reply to it—"Are you prepared to have such a revision of tithe rent-charge as will relieve those who are paying too much, and put an adequate portion of the burden on those who are paying too little?" A large amount of land in this country has risen enormously in rental since the Commutation Act. No one has ventured to propose that such land should be re-valued, and that a higher tithe rent-charge should be put upon it. The hon. Member who moved this Amendment made this startling assertion. He said that all the produce of the farm since the Tithe Commutation Act was passed has fallen in value, and, therefore, that the owners of the land have a claim for a reduction of tithe rent-charge. Corn, it so happens, is the only produce of the farm which has fallen. Hay and straw have gone up very much. Meat has gone up 44 per cent.; dairy produce 40 per cent.; potatoes 50 per cent. I quote from Mulhal's book upon agricultural prices. The position of the tithe rent owner has been prejudiced since the passing of the Commutation Act, while the position of the landowner has become better. In 1836 the rents on titheable land were calculated at £33,000,000, and the tithe rent-charge was fixed at £4,200,000. Now rents are £45,000,000, and the tithe rent-charge is £3,200,000—a decrease of 22 per cent. But we must look still further at the equity of the case between the landowner and the tithe rent-charge owner. At the time of the Commutation Act, Daniel Whittle Harvey, a great

authority, said the enactment would put £4,000,000 into the pockets of the landowner. We know that the gross tithe was then £6,400,000, and that £2,400,000 was instantly placed in the pockets of the landowners as the difference between the gross and net value of the tithe, all that vast sum went at once into the landowner's pocket. And since that time, as has been pointed out by quotations from Sir James Caird, the landlords have received £2,000,000 a year, which they would not have had if the old system of participation had continued, and a tithe of the produce had been taken by the tithe owner. The consequence is, that the landowner has, through the Commutation Act, profited to the amount of £4,400,000 a year at the expense of the tithe owner. With regard to the question of property, one-fourth of the tithe rent-charge is in the hands of lay holders, and must not be regarded as ecclesiastical property. We are not considering a clerical question to-day. Now, with regard to the re-assessment of the tithe rent-charge, in certain cases it must be remembered that the owner under the Commutation Act had a right to limit the tithe rent-charge to particular parts of his property, so as to relieve other portions of his estate; he had a discretion in allocating the tithe rent-charge pretty much as he liked, and so in a great many cases it is found that the land is heavily tithed in some places and very lightly tithed in others; yet it is now argued that, although this arrangement was made by his own action, the land owner is to receive relief in the case of the heavier tithe without any adequate increase being put upon the land that has been lightly tithed. The hon. Member below me has said that a deduction of 5 per cent. or 6 per cent. ought to be made all round. Does the hon. Member know what that really means? It means that £200,000 a year on the commutation value shall be handed over to the land owner, or if we capitalise the £200,000 a year that a capital value of something like £6,000,000, on consideration of this measure of justice being allowed to pass, shall be paid to him. I, for one, repudiate such a suggestion, and I say that the land owners generally do not claim so inordinate an amount as the condition of passing an act of justice A good deal has been said about corn averages, and, although I do not wish to go much into detail on this question, I desire to point out how some of the suggestions made before the Corn Average Committee would raise, and not lower, the averages. We find that oats form a very small portion of the Returns compared to what are sold, and it is in evidence that if the Returns of oats were properly made the tithe rent-charge would be considerably raised. Again, it was suggested that we should not take the market price, but rather the value of the corn on the farms. But there are two objections to this: the first is that if the farm value were taken that would not be the market price, and the tithe rent-charges were commuted into the market price of corn; and the other is, that the best corn is not sent into the market. The best corn is the seed corn, and that corn never comes into the calculation. Mr. Pell, who is a good authority, informed us that if the seed corn were taken into the averages, the tithe rent-charge would be very largely increased. Therefore, those who desire that the whole of the corn produced in England should be taken into consideration in striking the averages, and not merely the corn sold in the market, are making a proposal that would raise the corn average instead of lowering it. These are some of the reasons why it seems to me to be impossible to accept the Instruction of the hon. Member opposite. Nevertheless, I should have no hesitation in welcoming, if it could be carried out, a re-consideration of the whole question, and I am satisfied that the tithe rent-charge owners would be able to make out so strong case in their own favour, that a Parliament would be obliged, as a simple matter of justice, to raise, by a very considerable percentage, the amount of the tithe rent-charge throughout the Kingdom.

*(7.52.) MR. STUART RENDEL (Montgomeryshire): I believe I am representing the opinion of the great majority of the Welsh Members when I say that they sympathise with this Instruction. We do this in an honest and sincere way, because we are not so greatly affected and interested as England is in this matter. The anomalies, which

form a grave feature of this tithe question, and which are touched by this Instruction, are bad enough in Wales, but are less felt in the Principality than in other parts of the Kingdom. Nevertheless, Wales is in sympathy with this Instruction, because we feel that we are responsible for the introduction of this measure—that if it were not for Wales there would have been no Bill of this nature now before the House; so it is we who are the unfortunate cause of the stereotyping, and giving further sanction in life to the worst anomalies of tithe, and so bringing upon the English farmers of the Eastern Counties a grievous injury which they had done nothing to provoke or deserve. It is on this ground our goodwill is given to this Instruction. The fact is, that the Government of the farmers' friends love the Welsh clergy better than they do the English agriculturists, and that is the main reason why they are endeavouring to carry this measure. We Welsh Members feel that we are bound to vote for this Instruction, because unless it be carried the measure is one that will aggravate the situation in Wales, without redressing the crying grievances in England. The Welsh people are lovers of justice, and they believe it to be a most unreasonable thing to attempt to make a tithe measure a measure of police, without, at the same time, touching any of the admitted inequalities and inequities in the incidence of tithe, even though Wales suffers, comparatively speaking, less than England from such inequalities. At the same time, Welshmen cannot favour a deliberate attempt to whittle away the property in tithe, such as that which the hon. Member for Maldon (Mr. Gray) frankly avowed.

Mr. GRAY: I only said temporarily.

*Mr. STUART RENDEL: I am glad to hear the hon. Gentleman make that correction, because there is necessarily a great difference in principle between a mere temporary abatement, such as a fair landlord might make under exceptional circumstances in rent, and any fixed reduction of a general character. We do not propose that the national property in tithe should be managed on principles less reasonable and just than the property of private individuals. But I fear that the feeling we have on the subject of tithe extends far beyond the scope of this Instruction, and we earnestly hoped for opportunities of expressing our opinion in some other Instructions upon the Paper which express our particular views. Rumours have reached us which are unfavourable to our hopes in this direction. This will not affect the opposition which the Welsh Members feel it to be their duty to offer to this Bill at every stage and on every possible opportunity. We support this Instruction because we feel that the Government are sharpening the law, adding fresh terrors to it, and creating new and unheard-of liabilities by a measure for the collection of tithe in Wales without touching even with their little finger the most extravagant and intolerable grievances in the incidence of tithe The passing into law of the Bill as it stands would simply have the effect of creating further and more extended trouble in Wales, and in causing that trouble, in all probability, to extend into England; and all this even without that scant measure of compensation and redress of anomalies for the agricultural interest which might at least have been looked for from the framers of the Bill, who have arrogated to themselves so unjustly the special title of the Farmers' Friends.

*(7.58.) Mr. H. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham): I desire to offer only a very few observations, and will not detain the House more than a moment or two in so doing. I believe it is only by a re-valuation that the ultimate solution of this problem can be arrived at. I could not support the Instruction on the ground on which it has been moved, because the effect of it would be to wreck this Bill, and perhaps the Government also; but inasmuch as I understand that, according to the ruling of the Chair, the Instruction will apply only to a revision of the corn averages, I should be inclined to support it upon that understanding.

(8.0.) Mr. J. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): I think there ought to be some modification of the settlement of 1836. We find that in many cases the burden of the tithe is so great that it is driving the land out of cultivation. I hold that it is absolutely necessary there should be some re-arrangement. We are told that the re-arrangement would only affect a few tenants. But supposing that the present system, instead of injuriously affecting a few tenants affected the entire community, it would be at once felt that, in the interests of public order, a re-settlement was absolutely necessary. If the settlement arrived at has operated in particular cases so as to ruin certain agriculturists, surely in regard to such cases a necessity is made out for revision. There is another reason why I feel it almost impossible to vote against this Instruction; and it is that if this Bill is passed in its present form, as it possibly may be, those who are now suffering any hardships with respect to tithe will be able to obtain no redress. The only opportunity of securing such redress is by taking advantage of this Bill; and if that chance is allowed to go by, another opportunity is not likely again to occur; and, therefore, I feel it impossible to vote against any Instruction which will afford an opportunity of extending the scope of the Bill in the interests of those who are now suffering hardships from the incidence of the tithe. In supporting this Instruction we are simply giving an opportunity of discussing in Committee these grievances; we are not pledging ourselves to the adoption of any particular policy in regard to them. With regard to the question of corn averages I cannot altogether agree with what fell from the hon. Member for the Maldon Division of Essex. He pointed out with considerable force that, owing to the immense reduction in the price of corn, only the best corn now goes to market. That is so; but, on the other hand, the corn could be quite as profitably used on the farm. Again, at the time of the Tithe Commutation Act, the inferior as well as the best corn was readily sold on the market, whereas only the best corn is now sold. As to the question of re-sales, I quite agree that very often these re-sales are brought under consideration in fixing the average price, and some corn may be sold over and over again in the markets from which the Returns are made. But that fact in itself does not prove the necessity of a revision of the system. It is necessary to prove that this state of things did not exist at the time of the passing of the Tithe Commutation Act. The hon. Member for the Launceston Division has made a very different point. He has pointed out that the best corn is not now sent to market, as it is used as seed corn. But that does not affect the question at all; I believe that at the time the Tithe Commutation Act was passed, the best corn was not sent to market, and that the averages were fixed on the value of the corn that was sent. The hon. Member for the Oswestry Division has suggested that the reduction of 5 per cent. for the purposes of collection amounts in the aggregate to £200,000 a year, and that the capital value is something like £2,000,000. But if, as he suggests, that is a large sum for the clergy to be called upon to pay, surely it is an equally large amount to take out of the pockets of starving farmers who are absolutely unable to make any profit whatsoever out of the land. I think that that argument was a very weak one indeed.

(8.12.) THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I think that the time has now arrived when we may take a Division and make some progress. I have been challenged with regard to a Petition I have presented to the House on this subject, but, without referring in any way to the terms of the prayer of that Petition, I repudiate any responsibility for it. It is the common practice of Members to present Petitions, with the prayers of which they do not in any way identify themselves. One of my hon. Friends has spoken of the great hardships of tenant farmers under the present condition of agriculture, and has expressed his regret that there should be nothing to relieve their condition in the present Bill. I cannot help thinking that, as far as the tenant farmers of this country are concerned, their position is greatly exaggerated. Nobody denies that there has been a long period of agricultural depression; but, then, the rents of farmers have been reduced, and in any cases where the tenants paid tithe, the first representation to the landlord on the question of reduction of rent always has been that he should pay the tithe himself. I speak with some personal experience on this matter. It is true

I admit, that there may be considerable hardship in the present state of things as regards landowners and yeomen who cultivate their own lands, but I confess I am not able to follow my hon. Friends in the methods by which they propose to relieve them from the difficulties under which they labour at present. By adopting the proposed Instruction I doubt very much whether they will not be taking a step which, so far from lightening those difficulties, will have a precisely opposite effect. If the question of corn averages be re-opened in one direction against the tithe owner, surely it will be somewhat difficult, with fairness, to refuse to listen to appeals in other directions which may be in favour of the tithe owner. I admit that, if the calculation were made upon wheat alone, the position of the tithepayer would be considerably benefited. If wheat alone at the present moment had been taken, the £100 of tithe rent-charge in 1836 would now be worth £59 13s. Supposing, on the other hand, it had been based on meat alone, the £100 tithe rent-charge in 1836 would now be £133. Supposing wheat and meat had been taken together, the tithe then would be £96 6s., as compared with £78 10s., the actual average at the present time. Or it might be taken upon wheat, meat, and barley and oats as well, and the position then would be that it would be worth £93 6s. instead of £78 10s. These are matters which deserve very serious consideration. Moreover, the Instruction is so wide in its terms that it is not confined by any means to corn averages, and I submit it is a question which hon. Gentlemen should consider whether they may not rather be defeating instead of helping the very interest they desire to support by voting for the Instruction now under the consideration of the House.

*(8.50.) MR. C. ACLAND (Cornwall, Launceston): I think the hon. Gentleman who last addressed the House ought not to be left without reply. I understood him to say there was great reason for those who called for a revision of tithe to be cautious in the extent to which they urged their claim; and I gathered from what he said that it might be proved, especially from figures which he brought before us, which are interesting no doubt, and very applicable, that the result of the revision of tithe might be that the tithepayers generally through the country might suffer very considerably by a general revision of tithe all round. Very likely that might be true; but what the right hon. Gentleman did not do was this: he entirely failed, as far as I can gather, to prove that, if a revision of tithe took place in the direction asked for by Members representing the East of England, such a revision would entitle the tithe owners in other parts of England to claim that the assessment of tithes should be revised in their favour. The claim was pressed upon the House with very strong argument, very good reason, and in a moderate manner by the hon. Gentleman who moved this Instruction, and also by the hon. Member for Essex, and by the hon. Gentleman on the other side of the House, the Member for Maldon. I understand their point to be this: that the condition of agriculture at present prevailing in districts represented by them are so widely different from what they were at the time when the tithe assessment was originally made, that they would have a fair claim for a revision. The President of the Board of Trade, in his speech introducing the Bill, I think, admitted that tithe is national property. If that admission holds good, I think it will be at once allowed that, supposing we can prove that the amount claimed in the shape of tithe from agricultural produce is unduly large in any part of England, the claim ought to be moderated. Undoubtedly, if there prevail a lasting and continued sense of unfairness, a sense that the settlement under which tithe payers are holding their farms or estates is unfair, an expression of that feeling is certain to find voice in this House, sooner or later, to obtain redress. I contend that, while the hon. Gentlemen who have already spoken, representing districts in the East of England, are in a position to make out their case, and are able to tell us that the conditions of agriculture have so much changed since the year 1836, that they are entitled to a remission of the tithe in the interest of the tithepayer rather than the tithe owner, members from other parts of England, certainly I from the West, should be prepared to say that we can hold out our

case as tithepayers as against the tithe owners, and we can resist any claim urged by the tithe owner in favour of a revision of tithe in his interest. Undoubtedly, at the time when the assessment of old tithe was made under the Act of 1836, corn, the staple product of the Eastern Counties of England, and, of course, of certain other districts, was a much more important commodity in the English market than it is now. The production of corn by the English farmer was a very much more important part of agriculture, and the amount produced by him was very much larger than it is now. It may be that in other parts of England the same or any similar change has not taken place in agriculture. I think such change would have to be proved before it could be said that the tithe owner had a fair claim to revision in his interest of the assessment of the tithe. A great deal has been said about the subject of corn averages. I must confess that, for my part, I am unable to take the view which has been expressed with reference to corn averages by some Members who have supported this Instruction. I was a Member of the Committee which sat some years ago, and I quite concurred in the recommendation that the law with regard to the taking of corn averages ought to be more strictly enforced. I believe, myself, that the arrangements under which the averages are taken is an equitable arrangement if it is carried out properly, and no change, so far as I can make out, was advocated, or even suggested, by any of the witnesses who came before that Committee which would materially alter the position of the tithepayer. As I understand, the actual state of the facts is this: In the year 1836, when the assessment had to be made before the commutation of tithe, some adequate measure of the purchasing value of a sum of money, which was to represent the tithe for the future, had to be found, and that was found in the corn averages which were at that time, and had been long before, taken in several different market towns of England. I believe that a great deal of the complaint that has been alluded to by the hon. Member for the Maldon Division of Essex, and some others, that the corn averages do not fairly represent what the tithe ought to be is grounded on the

misapprehension that it is designed to take tithe of corn and not tithe of general produce. Every parish assessed itself upon its own general produce, whether the produce was corn or agricultural produce of many kinds; and, although the assessment was felt to be a compromise, it was only to be variable according to the septennial average. If you claim that tithe ought to be revised in the interest of the tithe owner in other districts than corn districts you have to prove that the condition of agriculture in those other districts has so changed since the parishes assessed themselves that the assessment does not hold good. I am not prepared to admit that the condition of agriculture in those districts has changed. It is only in the corn producing districts of England, I believe, that a revision of the tithe will have any serious effect. I do not wish to see the tithes, as national property, whittled away; but if they are to be the source of perpetual grievance, I do not think the House will be prepared to long resist demands clearly made for a revision such as will lead to the contented payment of what has been called a tax. I think it is an open question whether the measure of the purchasing value of the tithe fixed in 1836 still remains the best possible measure, and whether other articles of produce besides corn ought not to be included in the framing of a measure of value. Undoubtedly, in 1836, corn was the staple of the agricultural markets of England. That has now ceased to be the case, and you now have increasing amounts of dairy produce coming into the markets every year. To arrive at the real purchasing value of the tithe I think it is right that we should go carefully into the question of whether we cannot arrive at a more equitable and less variable system by taking into consideration other articles of produce. I think the Instruction which has been moved covers that ground; and as we are dealing with the tithe, I think the opportunity is a fitting one, and I shall support the Instruction. I am not anxious for a general revision of the tithe, but I am content to support the claims of those Members who represent the losing districts, and who say that they should be placed in a more fair position than that they at present occupy.

*(9.7.) MR. BOWEN ROWLANDS (Cardiganshire): Unless better arguments against this Instruction can be given than some of those which we have heard from the Benches opposite, I shall certainly vote for it; but I must guard myself and my constituency as to future action, especially having regard to the light in which the subject is regarded in Wales. The speech of the Minister for Agriculture I look upon as holding out to us a most tempting inducement to support the Instruction, because, unless I misunderstand him, he said that it was well within the bounds of reasonable probability that if the corn averages were re-opened the general average of tithe paid on corn would be likely to be increased. It is well-known that the Welsh Liberal Members—who are nearly the whole of the Members from Wales—and the Welsh people look upon tithe as national property, and think that every effort should be made to conserve it, and, therefore, they desire to do all they can to prevent anything —whether Instruction, Amendment, or Bill—which would have a tendency to fritter it away or diminish its entire value. Whilst reserving to myself the fullest liberty of action in the event of future legislation, I cannot help thinking that if there are hardships in some districts, it would be unjust to refuse to recognise, by voting for the Instruction, that those cases should be dealt with in some way. The Mover has framed the Instruction widely, having confidence in the after-action of the Committee, and so desires to leave it unfettered; while, at the same time, he gives a general sketch of the existence of those grievances which call for alleviation. There are two classes on whom these grievances are said to press. One class is the landowners, though I confess I am not particularly concerned with their special hardships, which are more than compensated for by the benefits Providence has conferred upon them; but if there is a grievance in their case which would come continually before the House it ought to be dealt with. The other class is that of yeomen and tenant farmers, and in their case I cannot but feel that any hardship they may meet with under the present system is a fair and proper subject for the consideration of the Committee. I rose simply to express the grounds upon which I think it right to support the Instruction, and to say that I would not do so if I thought its effect would be to bring about a permanent diminution of the tithe property, which I hope later on will be made available for purposes more strictly national, in the broad sense of the word, than at present is the case.

*(9.14.) MR. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke: I desire to point out what would be the effect of the carrying of the Instruction. We should obstruct the passage of the Bill in order to provide for a general revision of tithe, and although the tithe would be reduced in a few hard cases in Essex, Sussex, and Berkshire, and in very few instances in Hampshire, yet in the great majority of cases it would be increased, and those who are interested in agriculture ought to be warned that in this way great hardship would be caused in the North and in the Midlands. On some corn land the tithe is exceptionally high, but on grass land it is exceptionally low, and if the tithe is re-adjusted in the one case, it will have to be re-adjusted in the other. At the time of the Tithe Commutation Act, corn land was the best land in England, and grass land was not worth so much, and in the present day, as a consequence, a great deal of grass land which lets at £3 an acre only pays 1s. an acre in tithe. If we are to have an equitable revision of tithe it will only be fair if we reduce the tithe in the corn-growing counties, like Essex, we should raise it in those counties where 1s. tithe is paid as against £3 rent. I do not see how we could have an equitable revision unless something of that kind were done. I would remind the House that the actual tithe is not such a large amount as appears to be generally assumed. Throughout the whole of England and Wales the commutation value of the tithe was only about £4,000,000, and within the last seven years it has been reduced to a little over £3,000,000 by means of the septennial averages. Every £100 of tithe has decreased since 1883 from £100 to £78, a very large decrease. The rateable value of agricultural property in England and Wales has been estimated

at £140,000,000, and, therefore, the tithe of £3,000,000 cannot be considered to be a very great burden, although I admit that there are individual cases of hardship. But if the hon. Member who moves the Instruction wishes to remove those hard cases where the tithe exceeds the rateable value, let him turn his attention to the second clause of the Bill. I believe that clause will be practically useless, and that, though it appears to give a certain remission, there are no instances where it will take effect; and I maintain that if the hon. Gentleman opposite wishes to give any relief to the struggling agriculturalist in Essex and elsewhere, he should support some Amendment by means of which, when the tithe exceeds the rateable value of the land, part of it may be remitted. I think that would be an intelligible course, and one which would give relief to the struggling agriculturalist. I would also point out that although at present grass land in England is very valuable, and corn land does not pay, yet in 30 or 40 years the whole system may be changed and reversed. We may not have so much corn imported, and our corn land may rise in value, and then we should want another revision of the tithe. Then the whole of this agitation would be repeated, and another change would take place. I think there is no finality about this proposal, and though I am an agriculturalist myself, I shall vote against any general provision for re-opening the question in this way. As to the septennial averages, I would not do away with that system at present, seeing that we are now getting into the years of low prices. In the interest of all agriculturalists I would say, "Now that we are getting to low years let us keep to septennial averages." The hon. Member for Suffolk has proposed this Instruction as though it would be a great boon to agriculturalists generally; but I, for one agriculturalist, believe that it would prove quite the reverse.

*(9.20.) MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): As a Representative of a Midland County Division I may, perhaps, be permitted to take part in this discussion. The hon. Member for Hampshire has referred to the result of carrying this Instruction, and has urged that it would be fatal to the Bill. I imagine the result would be to initiate something like the course adopted under the Local Government Act, by which Commissioners were appointed to deal with the relations of funds between boroughs and counties. Obviously the whole question of revision would be one to be dealt with by Commissioners in the most careful way, and with the assistance of experts; but to meet the Motion by a contention of that character is, I think, unreasonable. All on this side of the House are agreed in supporting the principle that tithe is essentially a local property. [*Opposition cries of* "No."] We all agree that it is a National property, but we think it should be devoted to local uses. That is one of the reasons why I impress on the House the desirability of not passing this bald and immature measure without considering the whole question of the incidence of tithe and the division of tithe among localities. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture dealt with the Debate as if this were a very trivial matter. I would refer very briefly to the portion of his speech in which he resented the reference by my hon. Friend the Member for Saffron Walden (Mr. H. Gardner) to the well-known Petition presented by the right hon. Gentleman to the House in 1885. Of course, no man of sense would pin the President of the Board of Agriculture to all the statements of a Petition handed in in his name. But, although the right hon. Gentleman denies responsibility for the Petition, he did not repudiate its propositions. Those propositions, though they relate to a period six years ago, are of weight even now, when agriculture is beginning to raise itself in some sort from the depression to which it has so long been subjected. I will just quote these words of the Petition:—

> "That when in 1836 the tithe of the produce was commuted into a charge upon the land the circumstances of food-producing were altogether different from the present; that English corn was then protected by a duty on foreign corn," but "on the other hand, the cost of agricultural labour has very greatly increased since 1836, and tithe owners, in consequence of the commutation, escape the payment of an additional 50 to 100 per cent. on the expense of getting the 10th part of the produce from the

field through the various necessary processes to market."

But the passage to which I would draw special attention is the following:—

> "That many instances can be given of land being now let at a gross rent of the value of the tithe rent-charge only, while many thousands of acres are out of cultivation altogether, and the large number of working men formerly employed thereon have been driven away to increase the crowds of destitute poor in our towns; that it is, therefore, necessary, in order to ensure the continual production of food in England, that this Act should be repealed, and a re-valuation made."

I venture to say that these propositions will hardly be denied by the President of the Board of Agriculture before his constituents in the Sleaford Division. I do not know whether this Instruction has been subjected to the fiery eloquence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as one or two of the Instructions on the Allotments Bill did. I do not understand that we on this side of the House are charged with raising a question which is either irrelevant to the important Bill we are discussing or a subject which will not have to be dealt with at some future time. Although the origin of the Bill has been attributed to the heavy burden of the tithe in Wales being resented on religious grounds by the Welsh Dissenters, this should not be viewed merely as a Welsh question. The question is one which materially affects the agricultural interests in English counties, and it ought to be dealt with also from that point of view. While, as a Radical Member, I, of course, hold most strongly that tithe is national property, I do not agree with some of my hon. Friends that on that account the quantity of the tithe should be absolutely unalterable. Whether we are to have a Tithe Fund for the maintenance of ecclesiastical establishments, or whether it is to be applied to other purposes in the future, the question whether the incidence of the tithe is fair and just in relation to agricultural produce is an essential one which cannot be shirked, but must be honestly faced in considering whether it is a national property, which the nation can legally enforce and retain. It is also desirable to consider how far it is consistent with public interest, and the interests of a great industry in the country, that a share of the value of the products of that industry should be impounded for any special purpose, ecclesiastical or secular, which is too large for that industry to bear. The contrast in the prices of the special articles on which tithe is taken between now and 1836 is very striking. I do not at all agree with the hon. Member for Hampshire that if we go in for revision, it will mean the putting on of tithe in places where it has been fixed at a specially low figure, nor do I agree with the President of the Board of Trade, who, in his speech on the Second Reading, contended that if we enter upon anything like revision it will be necessary or just that tithe should be placed on other articles than it is placed at present. In the Debate on the Second Reading the President of the Board of Trade said that if the value of the land was more than 22 per cent. the tithe would really represent a heavier burden on the land owner and the agricultural interest than could be borne. In his evidence before the Committee on Trade and Agriculture Sir James Caird said that the fall in the income of the landowners of the country varied in different districts from 25 to 60 per cent.; and of course every one familiar with agriculture knows that the highest losses have been just in those counties where the burden of the tithe is greatest. According to Sir James Caird, the occupiers have lost more than 60 per cent.; he put the annual loss to the landowners at £20,000,000, and the loss to the tenants at another £20,000,000. What was one of the main objects of the Bill of 1836? Sir Robert Peel said the object was to get a fixed money payment in lieu of tithe, and thus put an end to the discouragement to agricultural improvement. It is important that we should keep in view whether the maintenance of tithe is really not in some counties operating to produce just the result which Sir Robert Peel said the Bill of 1836 was intended to do away with. It was recently held by Vice-Chancellor Bacon that the Act of 1836 did not alter the essential character of the tithe, which was a right to receive a proportionate share of the produce of the land. We may be told that this difficulty is met by the Government proposal with regard to the special rateable value. If the

Government had adhered to and amplified the proposal by the Attorney General last year when the Tithe Bill was in its most critical position—in the agonies of death, in fact—perhaps we might have got some substantial relief. The Amendments of the Attorney General would have gone far towards creating a Land Arbitration Court—a body which should bring the question of rent and tithe into an equitable relation to the quantity and the value of the produce of the land. I venture to say that the proposals with regard to the special rateable value are absolutely illusory, and will give no practical relief to the agricultural interest. I may be told that this is not a tenant's question, but I maintain that it is perfectly analogous to the question of agricultural improvements. In those counties where the tithe is high its amount operates to prevent generous landlords from giving such a revision of rent as they would otherwise grant. It also operates to check unduly the return of a share of the rent in the form of those first-class improvements which are needed by agriculturists all over the country. I will simply refer, in conclusion, to what I said in the first instance, namely, that this Instruction is not an impracticable suggestion. It is rather a suggestion of a most practicable character. If the President of the Local Government Board were here he would remember the long and anxious Debates on the Local Government Bill with regard to the financial adjustments of that measure. I contend that this is an exactly analogous question. Those who are acquainted with agriculture know that the tithe is a hindrance and a check to agricultural improvement. It is, however, a question of profound difficulty, and one which requires the most careful handling by experts. It is just such a question as that which was finally referred to the Commissioners under the Local Government Act. Holding these views I most heartily support the Instruction which has been moved by my hon. Friend.

*(9.42.) Sir F. FITZ WYGRAM (Hampshire, Fareham): I cannot see any need for re-valuation, nor can I see any great difficulty in settling the matter on a fair basis. Tithe has always represented a certain percentage of the annual value of the land. In some cases it was high, in some cases it was low—in some cases it was very low. What I would suggest would be that at the present day tithe should be taken at the same percentage on the present annual value of the land, as ascertained by the rent, as it bore to the value of the land in 1836. That seems to me a perfectly fair proposal.

*(9.43.) Mr. JASPER MORE (Shropshire, Ludlow): As I moved for the Committee on Corn Averages and have been Chairman of the Committee I wish to state my impression of the question. I believe the present system of corn averages, owing to the re-sales, raises the value of the averages 3 per cent. beyond the average price at which the farmers sell their grain. I was struck with the fact that no return whatever was made from the Birmingham Corn Market. I went there and found about 200 dealers and only two farmers. The dealers declined to make a return of corn sales because they were unanimously of opinion that the re-sales raised the average of tithe 3 per cent., in which, from the evidence laid before the Committee, I agreed. At the same time I wish to qualify that statement with the opinion that the 3 per cent. is not maintained now. The curious result of this Committee has been to largely increase the amount of corn returned; as this large amount is owing to re-sales, returned six times over in Mark Lane alone, the result is that the market appears to be so flooded with grain that the price is knocked down, and the average consequently is depreciated. I wish to draw attention to the fact that revision of tithe is supposed to be both the law and the practice in Ireland at the present day, as far as lay tithe is concerned. I have instances from the Landlords' Association of tithes being revised this year, but as I am informed an appeal is pending on the subject, it is not clear exactly what the law is. Instead of introducing other products of land into the averages, as is the Scotch system, I would advise making the tithe a fixed charge, as was done in Ireland. Then the fixed charge is made at 75, which the Landlords' Association now complain of as too high. I was struck at the omission in the speech of the President

of the Board of Agriculture to the often quoted remark of his distinguished Colleague, Sir James Caird, as to the £2,000,000 he said the landlords have profited by the tithe commutation. I think that so great a mistake could hardly have been made by any man on the question. He must have included the growing tithe, which was excluded by the Act of 1836. I challenged Sir James Caird on the subject at a meeting of the Central Farmers' Club in this Metropolis. It might be unfair to state from recollection his reply, but I well remember he said that remark was made many years ago, and he also referred to the statements he had made as to the landlords having lost £50,000,000 by agricultural depression. I feel we ought to have this Instruction more clearly defined. If it means that the corn averages are taken incorrectly, then I cannot oppose it. If, however, it is an Instruction in favour of a general revision, then my duty to my constituents obliges me to oppose it. I sympathise with the men in the Eastern Counties, and thoroughly understand that every Eastern County Member wishes for a revision of tithe, but if there is a general re-valuation, the consequence will undoubtedly be that whilst the tithe in the Eastern Counties will go down, the tithes in the Midland district will go up. The farmers in the Midlands wish things to remain as they are. I would suggest, however, that if a universal average is taken, the road to it should be gradual; that there should be a tithe taken on a six years produce, then on five, then on four, then on three.

*(9.50.) SIR W. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.): I desire to offer a few observations on this very important question. We have heard a great deal to-night with regard to the present state of agriculture, and no one can deny that many of the statements made have shown that in certain classes of land the tithe now charged is much higher in comparison than it was formerly. The great question for the right hon. Gentleman to consider is whether it is fair, in the altered circumstances of the present day, that things should remain as they were settled under very different circumstances in the year 1836. We all remember that up to the year 1835, when the new Poor Law was passed, the poor rate was enormously high, and that the tithe was calculated accordingly. The poor rate at this present moment is very low in comparison, and that is a circumstance which has been up to the present time very much in favour of the tithe owner, much more so than of the tithepayer. Then I would say one other thing, and it is this, there can be no doubt that the alteration which took place consequent upon the repeal of the Corn Laws has changed the whole circumstances of the case. No doubt there were causes which prevented us feeling that for very many years. All the wars which took place during that particular time maintained the price of corn far higher that it would have been if Free Trade had come into play at the moment it passed. I am not going further into that question. We know exactly what did happen and the position which it has left us in. If it has been beneficial to the country and detrimental to agriculture, surely the agricultural interests have some right to ask that their case should be taken into careful consideration. There was a remark made by my hon. Friend the Member for Essex (Mr. Gray) which I should not like to pass by unnoticed. The hon. Gentleman stated very clearly, and I think very accurately, that if things had gone on without the commutation of tithes in 1836, since the year 1879 little or no tithe, considering the cost of collection, would have been collected on a certain class of land. That is a serious question, which I am quite sure will commend itself to my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade. The noble Lord the Member for Darwen (Viscount Cranborne) stated that the tithe owner has lost by the improvements in land something like £2,000,000 sterling a year. The real meaning of the Act of 1836 was to encourage the laying out of money upon land, so that land should not be kept back by the tithe upon it, and the increase and improvement in value, therefore, only follows out that which was intended by the Act. The enormous amount laid out in buildings and cottages and making other improvements has greatly improved the condition of the people in

this country, and these are circumstances which ought to be taken into account. When my noble Friend stated that £2,000,000 sterling had been lost to the tithe owner, I can only reply that it has been a great gain to the country—the money laid out in the improvement of agriculture has done much for the improvement of the condition of the agricultural classes. I have only one word more to say, and that is to my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade. He very carefully pointed out certain clauses in the Bill which he thought would materially alleviate the sufferings of certain districts now very much distressed. I ask him to go one step further, and say that he will be prepared to give some support to those Amendments which have been placed upon the Paper. I have asked many clergymen—I have even asked a Bishop—and they have one and all said that they think that, under the circumstances in which it is proposed that these clauses should act, there is a grievous hardship which ought to be remedied. I hope, therefore, that my hon. Friend will see his way to put in fair and reasonable Amendments, Amendments which will be reasonable, not only to the tithepayer, but also to the tithe owner, believing as I do that if we came to a fair and reasonable settlement now it may last for many years to come, which I hope and believe would be for the best interests of the Church.

(9.56.) **MR. H. H. FOWLER** (Wolverhampton, E.): There has been in the Debate an amount of novelty which is positively charming and refreshing. During the years I have had the honour of a seat in the House, I have heard one unvarying wail from hon. Gentlemen opposite with respect to the condition of agriculture. Whether it has been a question of Imperial taxation or of local taxation, whether it has been the imposition of succession duty or the adjustment of rates, we have been told everything must be regulated and considered in the light of the extraordinary depression which the agricultural interests have suffered during the last ten years. We have been told that rents have gone down, that farmers' profits have ceased, and that no industry in this country has suffered so much

as agriculture. But to-night a change has come over the spirit of our dream. It is necessary to support a Conservative Government in a measure of this description, and we have had one hon. Member after another rising to prove that, instead of a great depression of agriculture, there has been very great prosperity, and that if any re-adjustment takes place in agricultural burdens based upon the produce of the land, that re-adjustment will result in those burdens being materially increased. I do not believe that agriculture has been or is a profitable industry at the present time. The figures go the other way. When we are told that any revision of this question will result in a large increase of the burden upon the tithepayer, we are compelled to turn to the very hard figures in the statistical abstract to see whether the rent-roll of England has increased during the last few years. I take it there is no more correct test than Schedule B. That shows exactly the profits of the land which are assessed for the purpose of the Income Tax. For 1880, those represented the sum of £69,383,000, in round figures £69,000,000. In 1888—we have not the Official Returns for 1889, but I take the figures from the statement in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget — that amount had gone down to £61,817,000, that is to say, that in the course of the interval there was a decrease in the annual rental of agricultural land in the country of something like 12 per cent.; therefore we reject at once the allegation of the noble Lord that there has been such a great increase in the value of agricultural property that it would have to be taken into account in any re-opening of the tithe question. But we have not only to deal with the general rental of the country, and I will give the House a few figures to illustrate what is going on in a large portion of the kingdom with regard to this matter. The document from which I quote is a Return in reference to 26 farms in the counties of Hampshire, Wiltshire, and Berkshire, and I will give only one or two cases in each county. In the case of a farm in Wiltshire the rental 50 years ago, when the Tithe Commutation Act was passed, was £530, and the tithe rent-charge was commuted at £76 3s. 11d. To-day the rent of that farm is £124. On a farm in Hampshire the tithe rent-charge, which only is given in this case, is £122, and the rent to-day is £125. In a case in Berkshire, where the tithe rent-charge is £75, the rent at present is nothing. In the same county there is another case where the tithe rent-charge is £166, and the rent is now £200. I maintain, therefore, that there has been a material change for the worse during the past 50 years. The question has been asked whether Members on this side of the House are prepared to do justice in this matter—whether, regarding tithe as a national property, they do not desire to do an injustice in order to improve that national property. I repudiate the suggestion. Tithe, like all other national property, should be dealt with justly. All we ask is that if the question is to be re-opened it should be regarded as a whole in a spirit of equity and justice all round. The object of the instruction proposed is that when the House goes into Committee on the Bill, the hands of hon. Members should not be fettered in dealing with any Amendment that may be moved, in order to render the settlement of the question more equitable by the Chairman being compelled to rule that, technically, such an Amendment is outside the four corners of the Bill. Voting for the Instruction pledges a Member to nothing more than this, that when the House goes into Committee our hands shall be absolutely unfettered, and we shall be free to deal equitably with the whole question. The right hon. Gentleman says he would be able to defend his position, and that he has no objection to alter the time for taking the corn averages, but all we ask is that we shall be free to deal with all the questions that arise. Who has re-opened this question of the settlement of 1836? It has not been re-opened on the Liberal side of the House. It has not been re-opened by the tithepayer. But when the tithe owner comes to Parliament and to the Government and complains of his position under the settlement of 1836, and says that it presses unfairly on one party to the bargain, then we on this side of the House claim that the question should be re-opened all round, if it is to be re-opened at all. The noble Lord says there was a great sacrifice made by tithe owners in 1836, to the extent, I think he said, of 40 per cent. But let me quote an extract from a very able speech made on the occasion by Mr. Charles Buller, an eminent Member of the Liberal Party. He was dealing with this very question in reference to the sacrifice of a certain part of the tithe, and he contended that it ought to be a much larger sacrifice than Lord John Russell proposed—

> "It would be doing an injustice to the tithe owner to take from him more than was to be given up to him, but it would be equally unjust to make the tithepayer pay more than he ought. Attention had not been sufficiently directed to the cost of collection."

That is of the old tithe, which, if it remained, would now leave nothing to be received. Mr. Buller further said—

> "In the West of England the cost of collection amounted to 20 per cent., and to show the House how the system operated, he referred to a case tried before Lord Tenterden in the King's Bench, in which, through the non-carrying away of the tithe in the form of early potatoes, the produce became spoiled by exposure to weather. Lord Tenterden held that, however great the loss and inconvenience, it must be submitted to by the tithe owner; that he must be in attendance to take the tithe, though doing so might cost him ten times the value of the tithe itself."

Then Mr. Buller went on to give illustrations in reference to the cost of collecting every tenth of eggs, milk, and other perishable produce; but the point of the argument is, that the commutation of tithe into money payment in lieu of payment in kind is an enormous boon to the tithe owner, for which there has been no such compensation as the noble Lord alluded to. One of the main terms of the settlement of 1836 is that there shall be no personal liability by anybody for the payment of tithe. That is clearly and unmistakably embodied in the Act of Parliament. It is one of the terms of the bargain that the tithe, whatever it may amount to, shall be simply a charge upon the produce of the land, not on the land itself, for there is no charge on the land, and that there shall be no personal liability. But the Government now propose to alter this—to alter one of the main terms of that bargain. We on this side of the House, however, do not contest this point now. What we say is, let it be shown in Committee that there is a good case for the alteration, and let the right be given hon. Members to consider, at the same time, all the other terms of the settlement. If hon. Members opposite open the question of the mode of recovery, we on this side have the right to re-open the question of the amount to be recovered. It is impossible to forget that since 1836 there has been a vital change made by the Legislature, which affects the position of both the tithe owner and the tithepayer. The figures I have quoted and the practical knowledge of every Member of the House prove to demonstration that the repeal of the Corn Laws has completely altered the conditions under which the bargain of 1836 was made. The agricultural rental value of England has been reduced in consequence of the justly free competition with other countries in reference to produce. It is not worth while to discuss that point now, if hon. Members opposite accept the position that the repeal of the Corn Laws made no difference in this respect. I do not wish to press the argument; but if the position of land cultivation has been affected, then I say the position of the joint receivers of rent should be affected also. If, as is the fact, land which 40 or 50 years ago produced 30s. an acre, and paid a tithe of 3s., now produces only 10s. an acre, and yet still pays the same amount of tithe, the fact, of course, materially alters the proportion between the two, and this is a matter into which the Committee should have power to inquire. Why should the man who receives the 30s. rent have to submit to a reduction to 10s. and the receiver of 3s. have no reduction imposed upon him? Then look at the totally different position of the rates. Mention has been made of rates before the Tithes Act having been 18s. in the £1, but if hon. Members will turn to the Debates quoted in Mr. Walpole's *History of England*, they will find that in some instances the poor rate exceeded the rental, and there is an instance in the Vale of Aylesbury where the rate was equal to 30s. an acre. Here is very considerable reason for dealing with the question as a whole. The argument on which I rest my support of the Instruction is that the Government are re-opening the settlement of 1836 in the interests exclusively of the tithe owner. The Instruction asks that in Committee there should be power to re-open the question in the interests of the tithepayer. We shall then be able to look at the question all round and see where it can be dealt with more fairly. If the supporters of the Instruction are wrong, they can be met by fair argument; if they are right, they will have the opportunity of making such alterations in the law as may seem desirable.

(10.16.) MR. AMBROSE (Middlesex, Harrow): The right hon. Gentleman who has just addressed the House spoke of re-opening the settlement of 1836 in a very light manner; but the right hon. Gentleman surely must know that the passing of this Instruction would make it absolutely impossible for the Committee to deal with the Bill in the present Session, or even for any Committee to deal with it in a whole Session. I deny that there is anything in the Bill before the House which re-opens the settlement of 1836. ["Oh!"] The Bill simply proposes to give certain remedies. Its main object is to enable the tithe to be collected. Hon. Members will say that that is for the benefit of the tithe owner. Yes, but the right existed before, and it is the business of the Government and the Legislature to provide a means of enforcing that right. Here is a body of persons who have had rights which they are unable to enforce because there are conspiracies and combinations to resist the law. The expense thus entailed upon the tithe owner makes the tithe not worth the cost of collection, and hon. Members seem to think that it is the right of the tithepayer to put the tithe owner in that difficulty. In such a case it is the duty of the Legislature to step in. Under the present Bill the Settlement of 1836 remains intact, and all that the Bill proposes to do is to enforce the authority of the law. Some of the cases cited, where the tithes exceed the rent, seem very hard; but that is the result of the Act of 1836, which allowed the landowners to apportion the amount of tithe payable within each parish among themselves. The 33rd section of the Act of 1836 provides that, in the settlement of value, and in determining the principle on which tithe should be fixed, the decision shall be with the land owners. By the 58th section the amount of tithe in the parish is ascertained, and then the land owners determine the apportionment among themselves. Say, for instance, that in the parish of Hampstead the total amount of tithe is £1,000. The land owners, in meeting, agree to the apportionment of this, and they have power to exempt certain lands from the burden. What was the result? Owners of large estates took the opportunity of agreeing among themselves, and in practice freed large portions of their estates from tithe, placing the whole charge on the remainder. I do not want to make a personal allusion; but I may mention, by way of illustration, that I happened to be interested, as Trustee, in a small plot of land or allotment of something like half an acre, and this bears the whole tithe of a large estate of 150 acres. The Legislature gave land owners this power of settlement, and where they did not exercise that power the Land Tax Commissioners did it, the safeguard to tithe owners being that the land should be at least three times the value of the tithe secured upon it. In the result land owners and tithe owners became dual owners, and ascertained their respective shares by agreement among themselves. Incidentally other matters are introduced; but the object of the Bill is to provide for the collection of tithe. The Bill, while leaving the settlement of 1836 untouched, deals with a crying evil which is a disgrace to any Government, and I hope the House will reject the Instruction, which would kill the Bill by Amendments which it would be impossible to pass.

(10.30.) MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): When my hon. Friend the Member for the Eye Division moved this Instruction I felt some difficulty as to its real interpretation; but, after the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman the Minister of Agriculture and my right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton, I shall have no difficulty in voting for the Instruction, because, in common with other hon. Members, I am concerned in the protection of what is really a national estate. At the same time, we wish to do justice to the other interests affected. I do not wish to see any injury done to the clergy. I think a good case has been made out by my hon. Friend the Member for Eye on behalf of the agriculturists of the Eastern Counties, who, owing to certain circumstances which have occurred in recent years, have been placed in a peculiarly difficult position. I think that the Government have gone too far to justify them in now saying that the settlement of 1836 has not been re-opened. Undoubtedly it has been re-opened. If there were no justification whatsoever for meddling with this question at a time when Parliament has its hands so full, and when the country is looking for legislation in other directions, the Government ought not to have included in this Bill so many contentious points. I say that this question has been re-opened in many important phases. An hon. Member has stated his belief that there can be no final settlement of this question unless the incidence of the tithe itself is re-considered. Many of us on this side of the House are of the same opinion, and we hold that if this Instruction is carried and if the Committee is left free to deal with this matter, we shall be able to take into consideration the hardships which are prevalent in corn-growing counties and to deal with the evils of under-assessment as well as of over-assessment. We understand the principle of the tithe to be simply 1-10th the produce of the soil. It may be that a great deal of the land in the Eastern Counties is not now yielding so much as it yielded in 1836; but, on the other hand, we should find that other parts of the country are paying much less than 1-10th of the produce of the soil. This is a national estate, and if the landlords are to suffer in one direction, surely it is the duty of Parliament to see that a proper balance is maintained. I have observed that wherever the landlord class are suffering they have shown no disposition to fleece the clergy. Now, I have no disposition to fleece the clergy or to whittle away a national estate. I should be very glad, indeed, if the Government, by the acceptance of this Instruction, enabled us to go into the whole question of the tithe with a view to effecting something like a permanent settlement. At present, what they are doing is giving no satisfaction to anyone, and I venture to say that the farmers and labourers will find means to give vent to their dissatisfaction at a suitable time at the polls. We want to see this national estate maintained where it is possible to do so. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton has referred to the fact that the landowners of the country have suffered in consequence of the repeal of the Corn Laws. Of course, if he bases that statement upon the figures referring to the last eight or 10 years, he will find the statistics in his favour. But I do not hesitate to say that since the repeal of the Corn Laws land has been worth to the landowner a greater sum on the average of the years than it was in the corresponding period before the repeal. I propose to support this Instruction, because it will give the Committee an opportunity of dealing with these important questions, and I believe that if the Government will only give sufficient time to this subject, the result will be a settlement infinitely more satisfactory than can be the outcome of the Bill in its present form.

(10.36.) MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I hope the Government will make some concession on the question of corn averages, because the system as it is now worked is unfair to the farmers of England. In Scotland, I admit, it is different; but so far as England is concerned, I am able to speak with some personal experience, as I represent a body which owns some of the worst land in England at the present time—land which, during the time of the French War, was devoted to the cultivation of wheat, but which is now going out of cultivation almost wholesale, and within a few hundred yards of the house in which I reside there are three farms which are not being cultivated. In certain parts of Essex nearly one-third of the land in the parishes is out of cultivation, and the value has been reduced to almost *nil*. I have in my mind at the present time a case in which a farm in my own neighbourhood was sold at a sum of £3 per acre. I am aware that a revision of the Corn Laws will not bring the land back to cultivation, but I think it will do something to remedy the present distress, and I would remind the right hon. Gentleman that there is no more eloquent advocate of Disestablishment than a derelict farm.

Mr. Illingworth

*(10.38.) SIR J. SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I quite agree with the hon. and learned Member for Harrow (Mr. Ambrose) that in England we have a dual proprietorship in land. But the whole of the improvements on the land have been always carried out by only one of those proprietors, namely, the landowner, while the tithe owner has absolutely done nothing. And where the Church have been sole owners of property they have allowed it to remain in the occupation of the harbourers of vice and immorality, as is instanced in the slums of Westminster and infamous houses of Portsmouth, so long as those properties remained in the hands of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster and Winchester respectively. In many cases, if it had not been for what has been done by the landowner, the value of the tithe would be absolutely *nil*. I think the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) has rather understated the case as to the effect of the depression of the value in land. The Income Tax Returns give a more favourable view of the depression of agriculture than is really the case, because in many cases landowners have given 30 or 40 per cent. reduction for some years, while they have gone on paying the same Income Tax. The case of the Eastern Counties has been referred to, but it is the same in the North of England; while in Oxfordshire I know of land which barely pays the tithe. It has been said by the hon. Member for Harrow (Mr. Ambrose) that the Bill does not re-open the settlement of 1836; but if the Bill passes in its present state it will increase the value of the tithe enormously by altering the security, and no one knows better than the learned Member for Harrow that if you give a first-class security you are entitled to a corresponding lowering of the charge or interest. I think it is a mistake on the part of Her Majesty's Government to be afraid to have this matter threshed out in Committee. There should be free and open discussion upon it, so that both sides may be heard. The hon. Member for Leicestershire has complained of the want of finality. Well, I have not been in Parliament long; but I fancy if there is to be finality in legislation, there is no

need to have a Parliament at all. I have always believed that the object of Parliament is to revise, amend, and add to existing Statutes, and, therefore, I cannot endorse the complaint of my hon. Friend. This Act may have worked well for 54 years, but circumstances have now altogether changed, and I hold that the time has arrived for a re-consideration of the whole subject.

*(10.45.) VISCOUNT WOLMER (Hants, Petersfield): I have had the advantage of hearing not only speeches which have been delivered from both sides of the House, but also interjections by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, and I think that those interjections have shown that there is a considerable difference of opinion between the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleague the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton. I understand the right hon. Member for Derby to be in favour of preserving the corpus of the tithe while willing to consider whether, in some special cases, such as the Eastern Counties, a revision of tithe was required. On the other hand, I understand the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton to be in favour of a general revision of the tithe. I agree with the right hon. Member for Derby, and am opposed to anything like a general revision of the tithe, as proposed by this Instruction. The true reading of this Instruction is that there should be an equitable revision of all tithe, and any hon. Member who thinks that the corpus of the tithe can emerge unimpaired from such a revision must be living in a fool's paradise. It should be recollected that in a general revision of the tithe it would be impossible to increase the tithe on grass land, on account of the increased value of stock, while decreasing the tithe on the arable land, because the only standard of the tithe is a corn average. The only result of such a revision would be that the corpus of the tithe would emerge in a shattered, meagre, and whittled condition. Is there any equitable claim for a general revision of tithe? For my part, while opposed to any general revision, I am perfectly ready to consider favourably any Amendment dealing specially with the Eastern Counties and similar cases. It is generally acknowledged that Sir James Caird is the leading agricultural expert, and we may take it from him that the gain by the Act of 1836 has been to the land owner, and until the hon. Member for Dorsetshire becomes an even greater authority, I think we are bound, in the absence of a contradiction from Sir James Caird, to accept that statement. Whether the tithe remains chiefly in possession of the Church, or is devoted in the future to other purposes, the attempt on the part of some land owners to re-open this question for their benefit is founded on no just basis, and is wholly unworthy of English gentlemen. Hon. Gentlemen around me may laugh, but it seems to me that a bargain by which the land owners have gained £2,000,000 per annum is not one which they have now any just right to try and re-open. In this denunciation I differentiate the case of the small yeomen—men who are struggling hard for their living—from the general mass of land owners. Their attitude, if not grounded on as good a case as some of them may think, is at any rate natural. In my view, any hon. Member who votes for this Instruction will vote in effect for whittling down the corpus of the tithe, and for that reason I shall oppose it to the utmost of my power.

(10.54.) MR. PICTON (Leicester): I was unable to decide which way I ought to vote until the speech of the President of the Board of Agriculture convinced me that I ought to vote for the Instruction. I understood the right hon. Gentleman to argue that the result of an equitable revision of the tithe would be that tithe which now stands at £78 would become £133. For my part I am anxious for the improvement of the value of the national property, and for that reason I shall vote for the Instruction. It cannot be denied that there are special cases of hardship, and the Instruction will relieve them without injuring the national property. I understand an equitable revision to be that where the tithe is too high it will be reduced, and that where it is too low it will be raised. Otherwise, there can be no sense in the phrase, "equitable revision."

(10.57.) SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): In this interesting Debate there have been many remarkable speeches, but the most remarkable has been that of the noble Lord the Member for the Darwen Division of Lancashire. I cannot conceive that there could be any more valuable leaflet for distribution in the agricultural districts than the speech of that noble Lord. The hon. and gallant Member for Sussex has spoken with his usual plainness and frankness, and has told Her Majesty's Government that the Bill is one which nobody wants, and that, unless it is altered in a very material manner, it will be extremely displeasing to himself and his constituents. The hon. Baronet also gave the Government the advice that I myself have tendered them, both in the last and the present Session, that they might have done better to leave the tithe question alone unless they are prepared to deal with it on a much larger scale. The noble Lord the Member for Darwen has spoken of the extreme immorality of disturbing the settlement of 1836. There is a good deal to be said for that view, but if that is the ground on which the Government stands, why have they brought in any Bill at all? It would have been different if the Government had introduced a Bill merely to make the land owner directly liable for the tithe, as they have admitted him to be, although it is a liability he has shirked, and got out of, as he has out of every liability. Within the last 10 or 12 years there was a Bill passed in this House which provided that a farmer on leaving his farm should receive compensation for his improvements, but which, at the same time, enabled the land owner to get rid of that liability. The Government and their friends are very fond of these voluntary and permissive measures, and now they bring in a measure which, though professing to do so, fails to remove the liability from the occupier, who is just as liable as he was before. The fact is that it renders him liable under the name of rent instead of under the name of tithe, and the process is made far more drastic than before. I say that this Bill is one that seriously affects the position of all parties in relation to the tithe—it affects the position of the land owner and the position of the occupier, and, this being so, we ask that the Committee shall have power to review the whole question. Now, we are told by hon. Gentlemen

Sir W. Harcourt

opposite that every one who votes for this Amendment will thereby pledge himself to a re-opening of the whole of the tithe question; and it is said that there is some difference on the matter between the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton and myself. But in reality there is no difference whatever. I am in favour of preserving the corpus of the tithe and of making the necessary revision in cases of hardship, and that I understand to be the view of the right hon. Gentleman as well as the view of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Maldon (Mr. Gray). It is also the view of my noble Friend behind me, who says he is quite ready to revise the tithe in particular cases where there is shown to be hardship. As I understand it, an equitable revision would be that where the tithe is too high it should be reduced, and where it is too low it should be raised, and it is on these grounds that I support this Instruction. The noble Lord the Member for the Darwen Division of Lancashire (Viscount Cranborne), together with my Friend behind me, is extremely anxious in the interests of the tithe owners to re-open the tithe question. If there is to be a re-opening of the settlement of this question, the Committee will, at all events, have the power to redress existing injustice. My noble Friend is entirely mistaken in supposing that this Instruction aims at a general revision of tithes. All we ask, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton has explained, is that the Committee in dealing with this question should have the power to redress any injustice it may come across, and those who vote against the Instruction will vote against the possibility of redressing the special cases of hardship which are found in different districts. That is the vote which hon. Gentlemen opposite are about to give on this subject. The Members for Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk intend to vote against the Instruction. They mean that the Committee which is about to deal with the tithe question should have no power to afford relief in these special cases. Take the case of North Hampshire, a county in which I have the pleasure to reside. The hon. Member for North Hampshire has said there are no cases of hardship in that county, which shows that he knows extremely little of the county he represents. The hon. Member for South Hampshire, who followed him, suggested a system for which something may be said, and which might come under this Instruction, and that is that we should have a percentage proportionate to the old percentage of 1836 applied to the new condition of things. My right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton has referred to certain cases of hardship, but I would refer to one or two which I deem still more striking. In doing so I will confine myself to Hants. I have here the case of a farm, the net rent of which is £5, and the tithe rent-charge £120. I ask the House, what does it think of the relation of the rental to the tithe rent-charge in such a case as that? Here is another case where the net rental is £50 and the tithe rent-charge £160, and another where the net rent is £20 and the tithe rent-charge £80. Are these cases in which it is thought that the tithe rent-charge bears the same relation to the land and the actual rent payable as was intended by the Legislature? Everybody knows it does not. You may say the settlement of 1836 was final, and, therefore, you will not re-open it, but you cannot say that logically, because you are now re-opening the question, and in doing so you ought to place the Committee in a position to redress these injustices. My noble Friend behind me said he wished to see these injustices redressed, and would be glad to see this done in Committee. How is he going to do this if the Committee are not so instructed? By objecting to this Instruction he is absolutely disabling himself from doing the very thing he wants to do. One argument which struck me as new was used by an hon. Member, who pointed out that the tithe-payer is actually paying a large sum of money by way of a present to the tithe owner in consideration of the payment of the rate. That is to say, in addition to the tithe on the land there would be 16s. an acre given for the rate, which was really only 2s. or 3s. in the £1. He gave figures showing that as much as £120 a year had been given to the tithe owner in respect of rates which really only amounted to £20 a year, so that the tithe owner was receiving £100 a year in respect of rates he never paid at all. These are questions which are perfectly free to arise, and which we ought to be perfectly free to discuss. All we ask by this Instruction is that we may deal freely with these questions in Committee. But what is the line the Government, who profess to be the farmers' friends, are taking? They say—"We are going to vote against this Instruction; we will debar the Committee from considering any question of injustice which may be proved, whether in Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, or elsewhere." I challenge the Attorney General, who will follow me, to say whether, without some such Instruction, it will be possible to redress the grievances I have referred to within the four corners of this Bill. If he cannot show this, the result will be that Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Berkshire, Hampshire, and other counties will have still to suffer the existing inequality of the tithe, and will be refused the means of obtaining justice. Regarding this Bill as guilty of special and unnecessary injustice to occupiers of land in respect of tithes, I say the injustice is greatly aggravated by debarring the Committee from the means of correcting existing inequalities. A general re-valuation of the tithes is not contemplated by this Amendment. It only enables the Committee to deal with injustice where it arises. Representatives of agricultural counties will take an immense responsibility on themselves in refusing to allow the Committee this power. It is said that the tithe is national property and we must not whittle it away. I have no desire to whittle it away, but I agree with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, that if it be national property it ought to be dealt with like all other national property, and if it has exemptions, privileges, or monopolies, which do not apply to other national property, it ought to be corrected in that respect. What has been the case in regard to the Crown estates and our national property? One of the oldest demands of hon. Members opposite was, that the exemption of rates enjoyed by Crown lands in former times should be taken away. That was a fair demand, and the privilege enjoyed by the national property was corrected in that respect. Therefore, the argument that because this is national property it should not be freely and fairly dealt with, goes for nothing. It seems to me that the case made out by my hon. Friend is unanswerable. No one has risen on the other side to say there are not districts in this country where the unequal operation of the tithe is unfair and unjust. Here, however, we have a Bill dealing with the tithe question, and yet hon. Members representing agricultural districts are about to refuse this House the means of dealing with admitted injustice and redressing admitted inequalities. That seems to me a most extraordinary position. If, however, they insist on adopting it we cannot help it. We are not the farmers' friends, at least in that sense. What we say is this, If you propose to open the tithes question at all you ought to allow the whole question to be opened. If Amendments are proposed which are not fair and reasonable you may reject them, but do not preclude yourselves from considering Amendments of this description on the ground that they will admit proposals which are necessary to redress injustice and inequality, on which ground I, for one, give it my cordial support.

*(11.20.) THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I can assure the right hon. Gentleman I shall not neglect the challenge which he has, with great courtesy, given to me, but I shall deal with the particular point. Certainly it would be a great injustice to the supporters of Her Majesty's Government if we left them to vote on the merits of this question under the impression that they would do so on the lines indicated by the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman is under a complete misapprehension as to what the real provisions of the Bill are. But I must allude to a very important question which was dealt with in the absence of the right hon. Gentleman.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I have not been absent.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I do not mean absent in the sense that the right hon. Gentleman is not master of the Debate, but I believe he was absent while this particular point was being dealt with.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I was only absent five minutes.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I am extremely sorry I referred to the absence of the right hon. Gentleman, and I am sure we are all glad that he has been here the whole time. It was said by hon. Members sitting behind me that if the Instruction simply enabled the question of corn averages to be gone into they should vote for it If that be the real meaning of the Instruction it is quite impossible that it could have been moved by the hon. Member opposite. There stand on the Paper, in the names of the hon. Member for the Ashburton Division and of the hon. Member for Glamorganshire, two Instructions which distinctly raise the question of re-adjusting the method of taking the tithe rent-charge averages. Instead of these Instructions, the hon. Member has moved an Instruction which, as has been pointed out more than once, would enable the right hon. Gentleman opposite to submit any Amendments he wished in Committee. There would be nothing to prevent Amendments being put down to raise the whole question. Let me explain to my hon. Friends behind me exactly the position. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton did not in any way blink the point that the question of an equitable revision would be open to the House. What, then, comes of the suggestion that we are only voting for an Instruction to deal with corn averages and the method of taking them? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton did not suggest that it would be in any way so limited. I understand the hon. Members for Maldon and Dorsetshire to say that if a Division is to be taken solely on the question of corn averages they would vote for the Instruction. But I would point out that if this instruction were passed it would enable hon. Members to smother the Bill with Amendments, involving questions of the greatest difficulty, and which could only be adjusted by an expenditure of time which is not at our disposal this

Session, or in any one Session. The Government are not unwilling to deal with the question of corn averages, but this Instruction goes a great deal further than the narrow grounds on which hon. Members behind me are willing to support it. I may add that the Government are willing to afford temporary relief in cases of hardship. If the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby had time to consider the Amendments on the Paper—he has time to write letters to the newspapers—he would see that these cases of hardship are dealt with by these Amendments. These Amendments we are fully prepared to consider on their merits, and we believe they go far to meet the equities of the cases referred to by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton. Where the produce or rental value of the land has fallen so low that it has no proper relation to tithe, there is nothing in the Bill to prevent temporary relief being given. We are prepared to consider suggestions upon the question of corn averages, and I go further, and say that we are prepared to consider any definite or practical scheme that may be submitted. Five or six suggestions have been made in a tentative way, but no definite or practical scheme has yet been put forward. Her Majesty's Government are ready to give effect to any such scheme by practical legislation as soon as it can be devised. But I protest that if this Instruction is passed it will enable hon. Members to load the Bill with an unlimited number of Amendments, each one of them raising the Mover's own view of what is to be an equitable revision of the Settlement of 1836, and which would bring about a result which some hon. Members would not be unwilling to see, namely, that it would be impossible to pass the Bill in the present year. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby challenged me to show that this Bill would enable the House to deal with special cases of hardship; and he went so far as to say—"I am sorry that he pledged his great Parliamentary reputation so high;"—that everybody who voted against this Instruction would be voting against the possibility of the House dealing with these cases of hardship. Sometimes, when I read the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman—and I read them all—I think that his imagination plays a very considerable part in the representation which he gives of the schemes of Her Majesty's Government. I do not think that it is meant unfairly, but I do say this, that he trusts very largely to his imagination. I have not time to argue this point at length. The rgiht hon. Gentleman said, three or four times, positively and distinctly that to vote against the Instruction would preclude the Committee from dealing with cases of hardship. Is he aware that the Bill proposes that the tithe shall be reduced in cases where the standard, it may be of the rent or of the produce, has been ascertained to be less than the tithe? There are Amendments on the Paper which propose that if the rental or profit value, however it be ascertained, is below a certain figure, the tithe will be reduced one-half, or down to that figure. The right hon. Gentleman may shake his head; but I challenge him to put an Amendment on the Paper, or to object, when Mr. Courtney is in the Chair, that any Amendment in that direction is out of order. I am justified, I think, in telling hon. Members that they need not be afraid of its being said that they are precluding themselves from going into these cases of hardship. I would again point out that, unless the right hon. Gentleman is able to take the Bill and show that these cases of hardship cannot be dealt with in Committee, the assertion the right hon. Gentleman has made, but which he has not endeavoured to support by argument, should scarcely have been made in the House. Both the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton said that this Bill re-opens the settlement of 1836. I cannot understand gentlemen with logical minds and legal knowledge putting such an argument before the House. The settlement of 1836 provided that instead of 1-10th of the produce there should be a rent-charge fluctuating in amount with the fluctuations in the price of wheat, barley, and oats, and that it should be paid by the landowner. I pass by the customary and somewhat threadbare attack on landowners in general to which we have been treated to-night, and will only say that the other principle involved in the settlement of 1836 was that whatever might be the improvement in the land the tithe owner should never receive more than this rent-charge. I will not discuss whether that was an equitable assessment or not; but I do not think any hon. Member will suggest that I have not fairly stated the points in the settlement of 1836. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby says the Government have ripped up that settlement. I listened with astonishment, and waited to hear in what respect they have done so. The right hon. Gentleman asserted the Government have imposed a personal liability on the occupier. I will assert they have imposed no such liability; but I will not stop to bandy words on that, because my right hon. Friend has said that the Government are willing to insert words to prevent any such result being brought about. Have the Government done nothing to relieve the hard cases? They have proposed that the actual rent shall be reduced in certain cases. By the clauses of the Bill they have attempted to reduce the burden in certain cases where it is thought to press hardly. The hon. Member for North Hants thinks the standard we have set up will not be satisfactory—that our relief will not go far enough; but whether he is right or we are right we have by the clauses attempted to reduce the burden in hard cases. Will any hon. Member who is willing to deal fairly with my position be good enough to suggest to me what part of the settlement of 1836 is ripped up? It is provided that the owner shall be the only person responsible. The clause reserving existing contracts is a mere incident which appears in every Act of Parliament of the kind, and has nothing to do with the main scope of the Bill. In all future contracts the owner and not the occupier will have to pay the tithe. In that respect we are absolutely carrying out the settlement of 1836. Again, we have given no increased value of any sort or any kind by this Bill to the tithe owner, except that involved in the settlement of 1836. Lastly, in the cases in which we have given relief we have given it to the occupier and not to the owner. All the steps we have taken have been steps to redress the evil felt by the persons who have paid the tithe, and in no way to give any increased value, either in amount or security, beyond the Act of 1836 to those who receive the tithe. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman cannot now reply to my speech; but these questions will come up over and over again in the course of the discussion on the clauses of the Bill, and I will respectfully, but firmly, challenge the right hon. Gentleman to point out then in what respect I am wrong when I say the Bill does not break up the settlement of 1836. I trust that I have made my meaning clear. I will only assert again that this Instruction is not necessary for the purpose of enabling relief to be given in cases of hardship.

(11.38.) SIR H. VIVIAN rose to address the House.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

(11.40.) The House divided:—Ayes 238; Noes 197.—(Div. List, No. 117.)

Question put accordingly.

(11.55.) The House divided:—Ayes 197; Noes 240.—(Div. List, No. 118.)

(12.8.) MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask, as a matter of order, whether it is not now necessary to go on to the next Order, as the time for contested business is passed?

*MR. SPEAKER: I was about to take the House into counsel upon an entirely new point which has arisen. The position is this: There are several other Instructions on the Paper. If there were no other Instructions down on the Paper I should have to leave the Chair without Question put. There are a number of Instructions down; but I regret to inform the hon. Members, in whose names the other Instructions stand, that they are not in order. Some of them have been anticipated, and others are beyond the scope of the Bill. Under these circumstances, strictly and technically, I should leave the Chair and allow the proceedings to be completed as they originated before 12 o'clock. I do not, however, wish to do so without the full concurrence of the House, the occasion being a perfectly new one. I am not going to insist upon any technicality. I am disposed to take the House fully into my confidence. I shall not leave the Chair if the House objects to my doing so.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Would not discussion on the subject constitute opposed business?

*MR. SPEAKER: The House will observe that there is no question before the House on the assumption that these Instructions are out of order. Of course, I know very well that it is possible some Instructions may be put down which may be in order. If hon. Members wish me to state specifically and categorically why the Instructions are out of order I will do so. [*Cries of* "Yes," *and* "No, no!"] Probably, the House will not think it necessary that I should do that. I shall only leave the Chair, as I say, after that explanation, with the concurrence of the House. I have no personal feeling, I need not say.

MR. P. STANHOPE (Wednesbury): Am I to understand that, in consequence of your ruling, it is open to any Member to object to your leaving the Chair?

*MR. SPEAKER: No objection can be taken technically; but it is a new point which has arisen, and, as I have said before, I have stated it to the House as fully and as fairly as I could. I cannot say there is a technical rule, but I do not wish to put the House to any inconvenience. The Instructions, as a matter of fact, are out of order. There is no question, therefore, before the House, and, technically, I say, I should be obliged to leave the Chair, and think myself entitled to leave the Chair without Question put; but, if the House objects, the Debate must stand over.

MR. P. STANHOPE: Under the circumstances of your recent ruling, and considering the fact that there are many hon. Friends of mine who would like, perhaps, to put in order the Instructions they have at present on the Paper, I shall, with great respect to the Chair, take what formal course may be necessary to raise an objection to your leaving the Chair.

*MR. SPEAKER: I shall not leave the Chair unless the House generally wishes me to do so. Perhaps the House will be kind enough to express an opinion. [*Cries of* "No, no," *and* "Yes, yes."]

*MR. G. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.): Speaking, as I think I may do, on behalf of the Welsh Members, and without wishing to take advantage of any technical objection, all I can say is that we desire most certainly that you, Sir, should not leave the Chair.

MR. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): Will it not be in order to move that the House should proceed to the other Orders of the Day?

*MR. SPEAKER: I think I am precluded from putting any question that I expressly leave the Chair. It would be better that I should not leave the Chair.

MR. GOSCHEN: I do not rise to make any observations, because it is perfectly clear, from the statement which you, Sir, have made, that unless you saw clearly that it was the unanimous feeling of the House you would not think it right to leave the Chair. I did not rise, because I thought that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby would give utterance to some expression of opinion on the matter; but clearly, unless there is some more unanimous feeling than we are acquainted with at present, you would not think it right in the circumstances to leave the Chair. Perhaps I may add that we shall put the Bill down as the first Order this day.

It being after Midnight, Further Proceeding on going into Committee stood adjourned.

Further Proceeding to be resumed to-morrow.

TREES (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 70.)

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 2.

Mr. KELLY (Camberwell, N.): I beg to move, Mr. Courtney, that you report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I hope the hon. Gentleman will withdraw his opposition. This is a Bill on which both sides are agreed, and its object is to enable tenants to improve their property by planting trees.

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman is prepared to accept the Amendments which have been put down to the Bill. If he will look at the Amendments he will see that they do not in the slightest degree interefere with the efficiency of the measure. The registration provided for in those Amendments is a simple matter, involving no expense to the county.

Dr. TANNER: I think that if the hon. Gentleman will look at the facts of the case he will see——

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! If the hon. Member is not prepared to accept the Amendments it is impossible for us to go further.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

CUSTOMS CONSOLIDATION ACT (1876) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 247.)

Considered in Committee.

Dr. TANNER: I object.

Mr. CRAIG (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I hope the hon. Gentleman will allow this Bill to pass. He thinks it will promote smuggling, whereas its effect will be just the reverse.

***Sir A. ROLLIT** (Islington, S.): We have now got to the definition clause. If the hon. Member has any Amendments to propose I will give them my best consideration on the Report stage.

Dr. TANNER: On the understanding that only one stage will be taken to-night I will not insist upon my objection.

Bill reported; as amended to be considered upon Thursday next.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACTS AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 239.)

Bill read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

LICENSING ACTS (APPEALS) BILL.—(No. 35.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

On the Motion for adjournment of the House,

(12.28.) **Mr. J. MORLEY**: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade whether to-morrow, in case the Government succeed in getting you, Sir, out of the Chair, they intend to proceed with the Committee on the Tithes Bill, or to go into Committee of Supply?

*(12.29.) **Sir M. HICKS BEACH**: I should hope that the Speaker will be permitted to leave the Chair without any delay to-morrow, and the evening will then be devoted to the subject of education.

***Mr. JACKSON**: It was understood that it would be convenient to take the Report of the Consular and Diplomatic Vote to-morrow, following the Education Vote.

Mr. BYRON REED (Bradford, E.): May I ask when it is intended to proceed with Committee on the Tithes Bill?

***Sir M. HICKS BEACH**: I am afraid I cannot answer the question.

House adjourned at half after
Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 6th June, 1890.

METROPOLITAN HOSPITALS, &c.

The Lord Saye and Sele added to the Select Committee.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.

Report from, that the Committee have nominated the Lord Field a Member of the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c., in place of the Earl of Minto discharged from the Committee (with his Lordship's assent) on the 14th of March last; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.

Report from, that the Committee have added the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Bishop of Carlisle, the Lord Chaworth (E. Meath), the Lord Leigh, the Lord Kinnaird, and the Lord Emly to the Standing Committee for General Bills for the consideration of the Custody of Children Bill, and the Protection of Children Bill; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 6th June, 1890.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

CENTRAL LONDON RAILWAY BILL—(*by Order*).

Order for Consideration read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now considered."

(3.5.) MR. BOULNOIS (Marylebone, E.): I beg to move that the Bill be considered upon this day six months. The route of the proposed railway passes through a considerable portion of the district I represent, which extends from the Marble Arch to Tottenham Court Road. There is the strongest possible objection to the scheme on the part of the shopkeepers in Oxford Street, who, I see, are very slightingly spoken of in a statement which has been circulated by the promoters. They say that the very unusual course of endeavouring to throw out the Bill on consideration of the Report has been adopted at the instance of Oxford Street tradesmen, who took part in the opposition before the Committee. I do not know that the Oxford Street tradesmen are very much to blame. If they consider that their interests and their property are likely to be seriously damaged by this railway, it is only natural that they should oppose it in every possible way that they can. They are not so selfish or so foolish as to say that if it could be shown that there is an absolute demand for such a railway they would still oppose it, but they do object, very strongly, that an experiment such as this—for it is purely an experiment—should be made in so important a thoroughfare as Oxford Street. If their object holds good regarding such a thoroughfare, what can be said of the remaining line of route, which continues along Holborn, Cheapside, Newgate Street, and King William Street? They object to such a route as this being handed over to a body of speculators who have not the slightest knowledge of the scheme which they propose to introduce. I say that advisedly, because it is to be an electric railway, and there is no experience, in this country, at all events, of the success of such a scheme. There seems really to be no necessity for this railway at all, and, on that ground, I ask the House to reject the scheme. This line would not relieve in any way the difficulties of the traffic. It only proposes to deal with passengers, and it would not relieve in any way the cross traffic from the north to the south, which everybody knows is a source of so much danger and delay. It is, moreover, not a railway which would facilitate in any way the inter-communication of passengers by different railways, such as the Metropolitan, the District, or the main railways which run north and south, because this electric railway is on a totally different level to other railways being, as sunk in some places, at a depth of 70 feet. It is also worked on a totally different principle to any railway that has ever been constructed in this country. In 1863, or thereabouts, a Joint Committee of the Lords and Common sat to consider what convenience Londoners required in the way of railway communication, and, with the increased population since then, and the increased tendency to travel on the part of the public, I think that such a Committee might well be re-appointed, in order that the whole question of the traffic of the Metropolis might be very carefully considered and gone into. I do not wish to detain the House and will, therefore, conclude by saying this—that the Committee sitting upstairs evidently had very great doubts as to the scheme, because they inserted a clause which prevents the promoters from issuing a prospectus, or raising capital, until three months' experience of the Southwark Subway, as it is called, should have been gained. When there is a doubt of that kind I think it would be a wise thing to throw out the Bill and let the promoters come to Parliament when they can show that there is an undoubted success as to the working of an electric railway in this country. I beg to move that the Report be considered this day six months.

*Mr. GAINSFORD BRUCE (Finsbury, Holborn): I beg to second the Motion for the rejection of the Bill. I have no desire to prevent increased facilities being supplied for locomotion in London. I think that every Representative of a Metropolitan constituency would gladly welcome any scheme which would afford increased facilities for transit; but the question the House has to consider is whether this scheme would afford increased facilities. It is a railway to be worked by electricity, and I submit that electricity, as a motive power in this country, is altogether untried. The present scheme is a mere experiment, and my constituents in Holborn venture to think that Holborn is not the place where an experiment of this kind should be made. It must not be forgotten that some years ago a somewhat similar experiment was tried in the construction of a pneumatic railway, and that, after a fair trial, it was found to be impracticable, and was ultimately abandoned. We are now asked to commence a new work

in London by laying down a new system, and endeavouring to ascertain how far electricity can be utilised as a motive power. The inconvenience to the people of London is certain; the advantages are altogether uncertain. I know that this House is always reluctant to interfere with the conclusions arrived at by a Select Committee; but in this case the Committee itself has been in doubt, it has not been able to make up its own mind. A provision of an extraordinary character has been inserted in the Bill providing that the company shall not issue any prospectus or raise any portion of their capital until the Southwark Subway shall have been completed, and shall have been open for the conveyance of passengers for three months. I cannot understand why that clause was inserted, unless the members of the Committee themselves were in doubt as to whether the scheme is a practicable one. Therefore, in asking the House to reject the Bill we are only seeking to give effect to the doubts of the Committee expressed on the face of the Bill.

Amendment moved, to leave out the word "now" in order to add at the end of the Question "on this day six months."—(*Mr. Boulnois.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*(3.25.) Mr. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.): I am disposed to support the Bill, but I should like to have some information as to how far the rights of the public have been considered in regard to the permanent way, and whether the company are going to pay anything to the Public Authorities by way of compensation or royalty for being permitted to drive a tunnel under the main roads. If there is no provision of that kind in the Bill, I think it would be well to adjourn the Debate, so that the London County Council and the Metropolitan Parliamentary Representatives might consider the matter.

(3.30.) Sir C. LEWIS (Antrim, N.): I must say that I have not heard any sufficient reason given why the House should depart from the usual practice, and reject a Bill which has been passed by a competent Committee, after most careful consideration. There may be private objections to the Bill, but only strong public grounds should induce the

House to take the course suggested by the hon. Member for Marylebone (Mr. Boulnois).

(3.32.) MR. P. STANHOPE (Wednesbury): Nothing has been heard from the opponents of the Bill that adds to the information possessed by the Committee when they arrived at their decision. I, therefore, hope that the House will waste no more time about the matter, but will support the Committee. I may add, as a matter of fact, that the recent Vestry Elections in connection with this locality turned entirely upon this Bill, and that the majority of the Members who were returned were pledged to support the scheme. Only yesterday the Vestry of Marylebone arrived at the conclusion that they would withdraw their opposition to the Bill.

(3.33.) SIR H. SELWIN IBBETSON (Essex, Epping): I do not think the proposition to consider the Bill this day six months is justified by any such great weight of evidence as is usually expected when the House is asked to reverse the decision of a Select Committee. I must remind the House also that the particular Committee by which the Bill was considered, sat for 13 days, and gave the fullest consideration to the questions which were raised before it. The proposed railway would tend to diminish the present congestion of traffic in our streets, and it almost appears as if some of those who raised objections to the Central London Railway have at heart the interests of existing vehicular traffic, and not those of the public. Similar railways to this have been established in America with success.

*(3.35.) SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.): I must say that I never heard a weaker case submitted for upsetting the deliberate judgment of a Committee, which sat for a long period, and gave the closest attention to the evidence. The question of electric railways is by no means in an experimental stage in the United States. I have been on many such lines, and I believe that accidents upon them are not more frequent than upon ordinary lines.

(3.36.) MR. W. H. JAMES (Gateshead): Having presided over the Committee which considered this Bill, I should like to point out that the Local Authorities who have to keep the roads in repair are likely to be gainers if the railway is constructed, because the traffic will be decreased, and the wearing of the roadway consequently lessened. It is evident that something must shortly be done to relieve the great congestion of traffic in the Metropolis. There are three courses open—traffic can be conveyed either upon, over, or under the surface. I do not believe that an overhead railway is likely ever to be constructed in London, while if the surface traffic continues to increase in its present proportions an absolute deadlock may shortly be expected in some of our thoroughfares. No doubt electric traction is to some extent an experiment, but it is one of the functions of Parliament to sanction experiments made by scientific men, who believe that they will confer benefits on the public. The opposition of the shopkeepers is rather in the interests of their own trade, as they would derive advantage from congested traffic, but they are not the only persons to be considered. I hope that the proposed line will do something to alleviate the great evils which now attend metropolitan traffic. Among the opponents were the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's, who entertain a fear that the proposed railway may interfere with the safety of the cathedral, but the Committee received ample evidence to convince them that no danger of the kind is to be feared.

*(3.45.) MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry): I do not object to the principle of electric railways, but my fear is that the construction of a tunnel so near St. Paul's might tend to endanger the foundations of that building. Mr. Penrose and Mr. Ewan Christian, architects to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and to the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's, are decidedly of opinion that the fabric of the cathedral may be endangered if the Bill is allowed to pass, and Sir Christopher Wren, who designed the present structure, has left on record a full description of the nature of the soil upon which the cathedral is built, and a warning to those who should come after, that no tunnelling in the neighbourhood should be allowed.

*(3.46.) SIR J. PULESTON (Devonport): A good many things have happened since the days of Sir Christopher Wren, and we are assured by such

experienced engineers as Sir John Fowler, Sir Benjamin Baker, and Mr. Greathead, that there can be no possible risk to St. Paul's in sanctioning the construction of the proposed Railway. Perhaps I may be allowed to remind the House that the Underground Railway was allowed to approach Westminster Abbey within 70 feet and Westminster Hospital within 23 feet, and there the subsoil is sand, and no inconvenience whatever has happened to either building, whereas the proposed line will not come within 300 feet of St. Paul's, where the subsoil is clay. I think the convenience of the line will far outweigh the anxiety of my hon. Friend.

*(3.50.) SIR E. WATKIN (Hythe): I may be thought an opponent of this measure; and certainly I could answer much that has been said—for instance, the comparison between Westminster Abbey and the District Railway, and St. Paul's and the subway proposed. But that is not the question. I have been a good while in Parliament, but I have always set my face against this House without evidence vetoing the decisions of Committees who have had evidence before them; and I hope the House will pass this Bill in justice to a painstaking Committee, and as matter of fairness to the promoters.

(3.51.) SIR E. GREY (Northumberland, Berwick): As one of the Committee, I wish to say that the Bill was passed at the instance of quite substantial promoters, and after the most careful investigation. If the House postpones the consideration of the Bill now a great public advantage will be denied to the congested districts of London. The apprehensions which have arisen as to the effect of the Bill are, in the opinion of the Committee, based upon altogether insufficient grounds.

(3.52.) MR. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): I would submit that the House should pause before it makes a present to private individuals of the right to go under the streets of the Metropolis, a right which may some day be of as much value as the right to conduct traffic along the surface of the ground.

(3.55.) MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I quite agree as to the desirability of railways becoming public property, but I approve of the Bill before the House, and cannot help thinking that the opposition to it emanates only from a small knot of selfish tradesmen, who object to any form of locomotion which does not give passengers full facilities for stopping at their shops.

(4.0.) MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I am bound to say that I approve the Bill generally, but I think that in future such a measure should only be sanctioned on the understanding that the company promoting it should pay something in the way of royalty for the privileges accorded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill, as amended, considered; to be read the third time.

LICENSED PREMISES (LOCAL AUTHORITIES).

Return ordered—

"As to the number of Premises licensed for the sale of Intoxicating Liquors for consumption on the premises, which have been purchased by the Metropolitan Board of Works, the London County Council, the Commissioners of Sewers of the City of London, the Corporation of the City of London, and the Corporations of the several Municipal Boroughs in England and Wales, during the ten years ended the 31st day of March, 1890, the amount of the purchase money paid in respect of the licensed premises in each case, and whether the licence so purchased was sold or transferred or was allowed to expire, and in the case of sale or transfer what consideration was or is to be received by the authority."—(*Mr. Maclure.*)

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir JOHN MOWBRAY reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged Mr. Buchanan from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Elections (Scotland) Corrupt and Illegal Practices Bill, and had appointed in substitution, Mr. Wallace.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Committee:

1. "That, in the case of the Aldershot Roads Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with—That the Bill be permiteed to proceed."

COMMISSIONS IN THE ARMY.

Address for "Return of Commissions in the Army given to Non-Commissioned Officers during the last five years:—

Name of regiment.	Number of years service in the ranks.	The Commission given.	Number of Commissions given in each regiment each year.	Total number of Commissions given.

—(*Mr. Coghill.*)

QUESTIONS.

THE METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Mr. OCTAVIUS V. MORGAN (Battersea): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state the number of police officers of each rank, namely, Inspectors, Sergeants, and Constables, in the Metropolitan Police Force now doing ordinary or street duty who have completed 15, 20, and 25 years' service respectively; also the number who have, during the last 12 months, completed 15, 20, and 25 years' service; the number who have died during the last 12 months, and after what length of service; and the number pensioned within the last 12 months who have respectively completed 15, 20, and 25 years' service?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Matthews, Birmingham, E.): I cannot state the figures within the limits of an answer, but I shall be happy to show them to the hon. Member.

BRITISH INDIAN SUBJECTS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Sir G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies what has been the result of the representations made regarding the position of British Indian subjects in the Transvaal; whether it is true, as stated in the public prints, that both in the Transvaal and in the Orange Free State these subjects of Her Majesty have been placed under severe disabilities, their trade very greatly restricted or prohibited, the privilege of holding land denied to them, and their presence only permitted under special licence; if there is any truth in these statements; whether Her Majesty's Government will urge strongly on the Governments of the South African Republics the claims to free ingress and equal treatment of the Indian subjects of Her Majesty as much as the claims of any other class of Her Majesty's subjects; whether, in the Colony of Natal, British Indian subjects are under any restrictions or disabilities not applicable to people of European blood; and whether there are any such distinctions in the Cape Colony?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Baron H. de Worms, Liverpool, East Toxteth): In consequence of representations made by Her Majesty's Government some modification has been made in the Transvaal Law regarding the position of British Indians, and further representations have been made, but no definite result has been yet arrived at. I may refer the hon. Member to the answers given by me on May 3, 1889, and February 25, 1890. The Government of the Orange Free State having recently proposed to enact a law restricting Asiatics in various respects, a representation has been made by the High Commissioner, the result of which is not yet known. It is, however, hoped that some modifications will be made. The laws and restrictions are based upon sanitary considerations; they make no discrimination against British subjects, but apply generally to all natives of Asia, and aim mainly at defining a distinct "quarter" in each town for their habitation. But, as I have before stated, further representations have been made. The Indian immigrant population in Natal is for certain purposes, and for its own protection, subject to what is virtually a special legal code, including numerous restrictions and regulations which are not applicable to people of European blood. Moreover, Indians and other semi-civilised races are subject to special bye-laws as to registration and supervision in the boroughs of Pietermaritzburg and Durban. It does not appear that Asiatic races are subject to any special restrictions in the Cape Colony. If the hon. Member wishes to study the Natal laws in detail they will be shown to him if he calls at the Colonial Office. It is impossible within the limits of an answer in Parliament to state the effect of one great head of law in three or four separate States.

THE BRUSSELS CONFERENCE.

Sir G. CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if it is true that the Anti-Slavery Conference at Brussels have also been discussing the distinct question of levying Customs Duties in in the Congo Free Trade area; whether the British delegates on the subject of slavery had instructions to discuss the other question also; and whether, as stated in the public prints, they have given their adhesion to a proposal for levying duties?

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. Fergusson, Manchester, N.E.): It is true that the Anti-Slavery Conference at Brussels have been discussing the question of levying Customs Duties in the Congo Free Trade area; but it is obviously impossible to give information on this subject while the Conference is still carrying on its deliberations.

INTERNATIONAL TELEGRAPH CONVENTION.

Mr. LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether it has been brought under his notice that Lloyds' Committee has proposed to the International Telegraph Convention, now sitting in Paris, that the signalling fee at Continental signal stations should be reduced from two francs to one franc, in return for which Lloyds' propose to reduce the signalling fee at Lloyds' signal stations, both in the United Kingdom and elsewhere, from 2s. 6d. to 1s.; and whether, in view of the great advantage of the proposed reductions of these signalling fees to shipowners, merchants, charterers, and underwriters in this country, the Government has instructed its Representatives to support them in the Paris Conference, with the view of preventing a renewal of the higher rates for the next five years?

*The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes, University of Cambridge): The proposal which I understand Lloyds' Committee are now desirous of submitting to the International Telegraph Conference is that if the signalling fee at Continental stations be reduced to one franc, the Committee will reduce to 1s. the fee for messages from Lloyds' signal stations in the United Kingdom to shipowners not resident in the United Kingdom. I am not aware of any intention on the part of the Committee to place shipowners resident in the United Kingdom in the same position. I need hardly say that the British delegates will be very glad to use their best offices to secure any reduction the foreign Governments may see their way to make in the present fee.

SOUTH AFRICAN CHARTERED COMPANY.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the South African Chartered Company is within the jurisdiction of the High Commissioner; and, if so, to what extent, and in what manner; whether any map exists showing definitely the boundaries of the territories within the authority of the Chartered Company; and, if so, whether he will lay it upon the Table; and in what official paper is the charter of the company to be found in the final and official form in which it was granted?

Mr. O. V. MORGAN: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the question, I wish to ask whether the High Commissioner is in future to communicate directly with the South African Republic, or whether it is intended to appoint a successor to Mr. Williams?

Baron H. de WORMS: The operations of the Chartered Company are under the supervision of the High Commissioner, who, as Her Majesty's Representative on the spot, is fully authorised to inquire into, approve, or prohibit any proceedings of the company, subject, of course, to the ratification or otherwise of his acts by Her Majesty's Government at home. The second part of the question is founded on some misapprehension. Subject to a restriction against interfering with the rights of the South African Republic or Portugal, the company may, with the approval of the Secretary of State, obtain any commercial or administrative rights from local African rulers which it may consider itself justified in acquiring in its own interests, and having regard to its resources. The Secretary of State would naturally prohibit, under Sections 3, 4, and 8 of the charter, the acquisition or exercise of any powers which he might consider the company unfit to exercise, or likely to lead to international difficulties. The text of the charter as passed will be found at pages 227–232 of the Blue Book, C 5918. In answer to the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. O. V. Morgan), perhaps he will kindly give me notice of the question.

ADMIRALTY CONTRACTS.

MR. HANBURY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what contracts, and to what amount, have, within the last 12 months, been given to Messrs. Marrian & Co., shipping brass-founders, of Slaney Street, Birmingham; whether in those contracts any provision was made against sub-contracting; whether the middleman, to whom these contracts or some of them were sub-let, is stated on sworn evidence, given before the police magistrate, to have largely and suddenly reduced the wages of his workmen, on the ground that he had taken a new Government contract from a firm at a low figure, and could not afford to pay the former wages any longer; and, if contractors are required to manufacture in their own factories, whose duty is it to see that such a requirement is duly observed, or is it, as was given in evidence before the Lords' Sweating Committee with reference to Army contracts, nobody's business to do so?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): Contracts for gun-metal side scuttles, hinges, and other articles to the value of nearly £5,000 have been given to Messrs. Marrian within the last 12 months, the bulk of the orders over £4,000 having been placed in April last. No definite provision against sub-contracting was made in these contracts, because in many cases the contractor cannot make all the component parts of the articles he supplies. For instance, in the case of side-scuttles the contractor would not make the glass or indiarubber washers connected with them. Care is, however, taken that only *bonâ fide* manufacturers of the articles required are intrusted with a Government contract. There is no foundation for the report to which the third part of the question relates. Messrs. Marrian do not sub-let the contracts intrusted to them by the Government, and no evidence in support of such a statement was adduced at the trial referred to. A dispute did arise in connection with the discharge of two workmen, who were specially entered by the foreman in charge of the foundry to complete a large private order; but the case did not involve any question of the sub-letting of the Government contract. Casters in a foundry of this kind are engaged and paid by the foreman, in accordance with the established practice of the trade. There is no special staff told off to visit contractors' works to see that all contracts are executed on the premises, but many articles are made under inspection, and the Director of Contracts frequently visits the contractor's premises, as opportunities occur, to satisfy himself that the orders are properly executed there.

In reply to a further question by Mr. J. ROWLANDS,

LORD G. HAMILTON said: I understand that the Director of Contracts has not a sufficient staff to enable him to see that the contract clause is carried out in every case. Our contracts do not necessitate the insertion of such a clause.

MR. J. ROWLANDS: It is inserted as a precaution against sweating. It renders the persons infringing it liable to a penalty of £100. Are there no means of enforcing the penalty?

LORD G. HAMILTON: The hon. Gentleman refers to the clothing contracts. We have no contract for clothing.

PROCESSIONS IN LONDON.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return of the processions in London for the last three years; and whether he can show in the Return what was the object of the procession, how many persons were supposed to be in each procession, and how many police were detailed off to look after each procession?

MR. MATTHEWS: In 1889 1,177 meetings and processions are reported to me as having taken place; in 1888 1,403; in three months of 1887 198. The Commissioner of Police tells me that he is not able to give the figures for any earlier period. The Commissioner does not consider that in the public interest it would be advisable to state the numbers of police "detailed off to look after each procession." No estimate of the numbers of persons "supposed to be in each procession" can now be given. Under these circumstances it does not seem necessary to present any Return to Parliament, as I have given the hon. Member the information I possess.

MR. J. ROWLANDS: What was the object of each procession?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have no information.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): The answer of the right hon. Gentleman confuses meetings and processions. Can the right hon. Gentleman give the numbers of processions as distinguished from meetings? Does the Return include preaching at the corners of streets on Sunday, and persons gathered together by some one speaking? Can the right hon. Gentleman state the number of complaints that have been made to the authorities of disturbances arising out of the meetings to which he has alluded?

MR. MATTHEWS: I must ask for notice of the questions.

GLASGOW TAILORING TRADE.

MR. CREMER: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to a dispute in the tailoring trade in Glasgow, and to the importation of journeymen tailors from Germany by certain master tailors of the city; whether he is aware that the men, previous to their departure from Germany, were induced to enter into a 12 months' contract with the master tailors of Glasgow, without being informed that there was a dispute in the tailoring trade of that city; and whether a contract so entered into is binding?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have no information as to the facts, but I have telegraphed to Glasgow for them. Whether the alleged contract is binding is a question of Scotch Law, as to which I have no authority to give an opinion.

MR. CREMER: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if the Foreign Office could instruct the British Consuls in the towns of Germany, from which men are being brought, to notify the tailors of such places that a dispute exists in the tailoring trade of Glasgow?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: It is not a matter in which Her Majesty's Government can properly interfere.

THE NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERIES.

SIR T. ESMONDE (Dublin Co., S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Her Majesty's Government will consider the advisability of initiating negotiations with the Government of the French Republic with a view to the purchase of the rights of French fishermen in the coast fisheries of Newfoundland?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: No statement can be made upon the subject at present, or until Her Majesty's Government have had an opportunity of consulting the Prime Minister of Newfoundland and the other Representatives of the Colonial Government.

HELIGOLAND.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the statement in the *Colonial Office List* for 1890, page 133, that so lately as 1888 the annual value of the imports into Heligoland was, from the United Kingdom £305, from elsewhere £30,500, may be taken to be the correct outcome of the official Returns; and if he can explain whether, and under what circumstances, there has since been such a change that now the imports into Heligoland are almost wholly from the United Kingdom?

BARON H. DE WORMS: I regret to find that there was an error in the information supplied to me by the Department on this subject which I gave to the House on Monday last. The mistake appears to have been caused by confusing the Returns of imports from the United Kingdom with those of imports from other countries. The matter does not appear to be of much importance; but I may add that it is not possible, from the figures, to say how much of the imports professedly coming from Germany are goods originally shipped from English ports.

EXPRESS LETTER POST.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is now prepared to establish the system of "express letter post," as suggested in No. 46 (page 14) of the *Sixty Reasons for an Inquiry into Reform*, forwarded to him by the hon. Member for Canterbury, on the 1st October, 1889, in the following terms:—

> "Recommending the introduction of the system of express letter post, or special delivery post, which works so satisfactorily on the Continent and in America. A letter posted in Vienna or New York, having an extra stamp by way of special fee, is at once dispatched, and is delivered within twenty minutes or half an hour from the time of its receipts in the postal district to which it is addressed?"

*MR. RAIKES: I am not unaware of the advantages claimed for the system referred to by the hon. Member; but there are a variety of considerations to be borne in mind before adopting a preferential rate of postage, which some could afford to pay and which many could not. Another question arises as to the expediency of breaking into the uniform rate of postage established by Sir Rowland Hill, and the matter will require further investigation before a decision can be arrived at.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in March, 1886, the question was said to be under consideration? Has any decision been arrived at?

*MR. RAIKES: No, Sir; no decision has been arrived at.

BRITISH SUBJECTS IN FRANCE.

MR. P. STANHOPE (Wednesbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government have now more fully considered the hardships entailed upon British subjects resident in France by the French Military Law of 1889, which imposes military service upon children of the first generation born in France of British parentage; and whether Her Majesty's Government will, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, make representations to the French Government, pointing out that, in consideration of the fact that citizens of the French Republic resident in England under similar conditions are not liable to any military service, it would be proper to extend reciprocal advantages by the exercise of a dispensing power to British subjects resident in France?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The new French Naturalisation Law enacts that children born in France of a father also born in France are French citizens, and the Military Law imposes military service upon such persons as French citizens. Although, according to British Law, grandchildren of a natural born British subject are British subjects even though born abroad, Her Majesty's Government have been advised that there is no proper ground of protest against the new French Law.

PLEURO-PNEUMONIA.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether his attention has been called to the report of Professor Brown, which shows an alarming increase in outbreaks of pleuro-pneumonia during the four weeks ending 24th May, and that the attacks are largely among shed cattle, and are spread by their sale and dispersion; and whether, having regard to the limited powers and jurisdiction now possessed by Local Authorities, especially as to control over movement of cattle from one area to another, he will take steps to bring the Pleuro-Pneumonia Bill into operation at the earliest possible date?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Yes, Sir. My attention has been called to the report of Professor Brown, by which I presume the hon. Member refers to the usual monthly report which is presented by him to the Veterinary Committee of the Royal Agricultural Society. It is unfortunately true that the outbreaks of pleuro-pneumonia have recently increased, and especially during the last month, a fact to which I have already called attention more than once during the passage of the Pleuro-Pneumonia Bill through the House. I may observe that the disease usually shows a marked increase at this period of the year, which is due, no doubt, to the considerable movement of animals which takes place throughout the country. What the hon. Member means by the reference in the second part of his question to the very limited powers now possessed by the Local Authorities I do not quite understand; and he is probably not aware that the powers they possess already within their own jurisdiction are very wide. I have already directed that a communication should be made to the various Local Authorities where the disease prevails with the view of procuring an energetic application of their powers until the Pleuro Bill comes into operation, which I am quite as anxious to hasten as the hon. Member.

Mr. CHANNING: At what date will the Bill come into operation?

Mr. CHAPLIN: In September.

ARMENIA.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to the accounts have very recently appeared in the newspapers of horrible cruelties stated to have been perpetrated a few weeks ago upon Armenian Christians in the district of Khanoos between Bitlios and Erzeroum; and whether he can give, or will obtain, any information on the subject?

***Sir J. FERGUSSON**: In a Despatch, dated the 13th of last month, Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum stated that he had heard that a large number of Armenian labourers passing through the valley of Alashgerd on their return home from Russia were attacked by Koords and five of their number killed. The Porte denies the truth of the report referred to, and inquiry is being made as to the facts.

Mr. BRYCE: The right hon. Gentleman does not seem to have seen the statement on which my notice is founded, that one of the Christians had been roasted alive.

***Sir J. FERGUSSON**: We certainly have not heard of any such occurrence; but I am quite certain if it took place it will be reported.

BUSINESS IN THE COURTS.

Mr. COGHILL (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I beg to ask the Attorney General what was the number of cases waiting to be heard in the Queen's Bench Division and the Chancery Division respectively when the Judges rose on the 23rd May for the Whitsuntide vacation; and whether, as the Judges have vacations of three weeks at Christmas, two weeks at Easter, 10 days at Whitsuntide, and 11 weeks in the autumn, he would consider the advisability of either abolishing the Whitsuntide vacation altogether, or of limiting it to the Saturday preceding and the Monday following Whit Sunday?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. Webster, Isle of Wight): The number of cases standing for trial at the commencement of the present sitting was, in the Chancery Division, 627, and in the Queen's Bench Division, including cases pending before Divisional Courts and appeals in Bankruptcy, 1,212. The question of the length of vacations is not for me, but having regard to the work which has to be performed by the Judges and officials when the Courts are not sitting, I am unable to hold out any hopes that a proposal for shortening the Whitsuntide vacation would be entertained.

Mr. J. KELLY (Camberwell, N.): May I ask if Divisional Courts are in future to be composed of three Judges instead of two, as has been the case for the last 10 years? If so, there will be one Nisi Prius Court the less.

Sir R. WEBSTER: I must have notice of that question.

Mr. COGHILL: Does not the Attorney General consider one-third of the year too much of a holiday?

[No answer was given.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I had intended to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, inasmuch as on the 20th May he stated—

> "If it becomes necessary for the Government to make proposals for a further extension of time, then the views of the Government with regard to the future progress of business may be properly put forward,"

and on the 23rd May he made such a proposal without giving the views of the Government, he will now, for the convenience of the House, make such a statement as to business as he did on the 17th June, 1889, when making a similar Motion to that carried on the 23rd May this year. In the absence of the right hon. Gentleman I will defer the question.

Sir A. BORTHWICK (Kensington, S.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can inform the House with reference to what took place on the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow earlier in the Session; whether his Government have given their attention to devising any means for enabling the House to rise for the Autumn Recess at an earlier period than has been the case on some recent occasions? I presume that the right hon. Gentleman is aware that the present state of public business gives a special interest to this question in the minds of hon. Members?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square): I may say that the Government have given their very serious attention to the matter which was raised by the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridgeton earlier in the Session. The Government were urged to consider whether any means might be devised by which the House might rise at an earlier period of the Session. We have given attention to the matter, and my right hon. Friend the leader of the House will, in the course of a few days, submit proposals to the House.

CONTEMPT OF COURT.

Mr. E. LEES (Oldham): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether his attention has been called to the case of Mr. Thomas Harrison, of Hollinwood, Oldham, who is now lying in Strangeways Prison, Manchester, for contempt of Court; whether he is aware that Mr. Harrison has never committed any offence except in connection with the publication of a pamphlet entitled *The Coal Trade and Railway Rates*, reflecting upon the action of a Railway Company and certain colliery proprietors; whether the order for a writ of attachment against Mr. Harrison was made in Chambers instead of in open Court, and whether it is the law that a man may be committed for contempt otherwise than by an order made in open Court; whether Mr. Harrison is now detained in prison for a contempt for which he has already humbly apologised to the Court; and whether this is in accordance with usual practice?

Sir R. WEBSTER: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to be good enough to postpone the question. I have had no opportunity of communicating with the authorities upon the subject.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to,—Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, without Amendment.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

TITHE RENT-CHARGE RECOVERY AND REDEMPTION BILL—(No. 169.)

Order for Committee read.

***Mr. SPEAKER**: Yesterday I ruled that six Instructions which were on the Paper in regard to this Bill were out of order. After I left the Chair last night three more Instructions were put down, which were equally out of order with those preceding. Therefore, I have no alternative now but to leave the Chair.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

SUPPLY—EDUCATION ESTIMATES.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Class IV.—Education, Science, and Art.

1. £2,182,224, Public Education.

(4.33.) **Mr. PICTON** (Leicester): There are only one or two points I desire to refer to, but I think they are not without importance. Article 99 C. lays down that as a rule children of seven years of age must pass in the first standard. That, no doubt, appears to be a very practical and sensible rule. We all wish to see children advance as rapidly as they can with due consideration for their health and general development, but my point is that the continued insistence upon the individual examination of children at the age of seven in Standard I. absolutely prohibits the adoption of the Kindergarten system in our infant schools. I cannot get any Vice President of the Council or any sufficient number of Members of this House apparently to appreciate the importance of that consideration. While, however, I have the honour of a seat in this House I shall never miss the opportunity of insisting that we must continue to be altogether behind in the race of educational progress while we make so little use of the Kindergarten system in our schools. We are obtaining far lower and more imperfect practical results than we should obtain if we abandoned the system of mechanical cram, and adopted the system of kind and loving culture which is provided by the Kindergarten plan. There are many Kindergartens established throughout London, and in various parts of the country. The aim of the system is to develop the child naturally by pleasing and agreeable exercises, which involve very little labour to the child, and, in fact, are really a kind of play. Then I find in the Code an assumption that words of one syllable are necessarily less difficult to read than longer words. That is an old-fashioned and absurd notion. Some of the most difficult words in the language are words of one syllable, such as "eight," or "one," or "taught," or "wrought." The fact that such an assumption should be made with regard to the first standard shows, I think, an incorrect apprehension of what the real difficulties are at the beginning of a child's career. Under the Kindergarten system the sounds of letters are taught and associated with certain signs which the child sees before it, and by a very gradual and natural process the child comes to read almost without being aware that any effort has been made. The arithmetical standard is an absurd one to adopt for a child of seven. A child of that age cannot have the remotest notion of what a thousand means, or of any larger number than it can count upon the fingers of its hand. In Germany it is the custom to keep children at numbers under 10 for a whole year, giving them continual practice in the simple numbers, and thus importing a faculty for future progress that is never obtained under any other system. I think, at all events, the Department might allow more liberty to schoolmasters in these respects. I do wish the Education Department would re-consider this matter, and not make it a hard and fast rule that every child of seven must pass through the second standard. A great deal of what is called over-pressure arises simply from our rigid and mechanical system of teaching. We do not make the teaching interesting to the children, and, therefore, their nervous system is strained, and their faculties break down. I will earnestly exhort the Vice President of the Council, if he wishes to introduce a valuable reform which would be pleasing to all the best friends of children, to re-consider this matter. I wish to allude to another point, respecting the new system of classifying teachers. A new distinction is to be enforced between trained and untrained teachers. One would naturally suppose that by a trained teacher would be meant a man or woman who had gone through proper practice, had become familar with all the necessary technicalities of school teaching, and had learnt the proper subjects. But the word "trained" in this New Code is taken to mean something different. It means that the teacher to whom it is applied has passed through a training college, which is approved by the Department. Far be it from me to undervalue the importance of passing teachers through training colleges wherever it is practicable, but that is a very different thing from saying you must draw a lifelong distinction between those who have passed through a training college and those who have not. Surely, if it is a common expression that the proof of the pudding is in the eating, the proof of the teacher is in the teaching. If a teacher proves by his successes, by his power of organisation, and by the progress of the children under him that he is as capable as a man who has gone through a training college, why should you insist upon a stigma of difference between him and his trained colleague? I am aware that the Vice President has conceded that the distinction shall not be retrospective, but only prospective; but this concession will complicate matters even more. Instead of having only two varieties of teachers, the trained and the untrained, you will have three, namely, those who have passed through the training colleges, those who are untrained but to whom the rule does not apply, and those who are untrained to whom the rule does apply. The real difference between one man and another in a school is, that one man has the gift of teaching and another has not. It is almost as true of a teacher as of the poet, that he is born, not made. If a man is born with a capacity for teaching he will make the best of the poorest material. Therefore, I really think it is rather hard to institute a distinction between the two classes of people throughout their lives, without any regard to the way in which the untrained teacher may perform his duties. Some time ago the Education Department offered to graduates at college and to ladies who had passed certain university examinations the opportunity of entering the teaching profession in our elementary schools, even though they had not passed through the ordinary training college. Experience and practice were required, of course, but this being acquired these ladies and gentlemen were recognised as equally qualified for the profession with certificated teachers. But this position is now taken away, and upon these teachers rests, as a sort of stigma or disqualification through their career, the distinction that they are not trained teachers because they have not passed through a training college. This, I think, is scarcely dealing fairly with this class. Again, another question, and I think a very serious one, is the ever-recurring religious difficulty. I do not wish to introduce any element of dissension into this, which ought to be a friendly conversation, but still it is a matter that ought with all fairness to be considered. I find in the minority Report of the Royal Commission on Education that the number of students in the Church of England training colleges in 1886 was 2,210, or a proportion of 67·5 per cent. of the whole of the teachers under training in that year. Of course, there are no Board training colleges, although Board school teachers are put as a separate denomination in the statistics of school attendance. In the British colleges the students were 15·7 of the whole supply for the year. But when we turn to the attendance at the schools under different denominations the percentage is entirely different. While the Church of England students are 67·5 per cent. of those under training for teachers, the children in average attendance at Church of England schools are 47·3 of the whole attendance at elementary schools, the Board schools having an average attendance of 36·4, and these Board school teachers have no special training colleges. This shows that the supply of denominational training colleges is disproportionate to the demand of the denominational schools, and the result is that many Nonconformists, or those who are not attached to any particular denomination, have great difficulty in being passed as teachers at all, as the managers of the denominational training colleges expect as a rule that the students shall be of that religion to which the college belongs. This Code provides for the foundation of day training colleges where all denominations may meet together, but as only a very limited number of students will be able to avail themselves of these, the proposal is wholly inadequate to meet the needs of the day. The result of this disproportion between the supply of colleges and the demand for training by those who do not belong to the Church of England or any particular denomination is that young people must do violence to their religious or conscientious scruples, or be debarred from the benefit that a training college gives. They qualify themselves as best they can by attending classes and passing examinations. Why, however, should there be anything in the nature of a stigma upon them; why should they be supposed to occupy a lower position? Much dissatisfaction prevails upon this point, and I hope this matter will receive re-consideration.

*(5.0.) MR. J. G. TALBOT (Oxford University): There is much in the criticism which has been offered from hon. Members on the other side with which I can agree, but I am sure I am at one with my right hon. Friend when

I say I am quite sure there is no intention whatever to cast any slur upon those able, hardworking teachers who have not passed through training colleges. I am sure Her Majesty's Government recognise the good work done by untrained teachers. I must take exception to the assumption that the constitution of Church of England training colleges should be altered to supply the whole body of trained teachers for the country. What the Church of England colleges attend to is the supply of an adequate number of trained teachers for the schools of the Church. It does happen that a large number of Board school teachers are trained there, but that only shows the appreciation the Board has of the training given, they are glad to get teachers so trained. If there is any grievance on the part of denominational bodies, religious or non-religious bodies, who may think the training should be other than it is, well, the simple remedy is for them to put their hands in their pockets and provide themselves with training colleges, which I have no doubt would receive recognition by the State, and would supply the teachers required. Turning from the remarks of the hon. Member on this subject, I join in the chorus of congratulation to the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President upon the success of his New Code. I avoid old controversies, and will simply say we have before us a most satisfactory Code. Of course, like all human institutions, it has its imperfections, and I am sure my right hon. Friend will not think I am going beyond the limits of friendly criticism when I say it may be possible even now to make improvements in this Code. The advantages of the Code are apparent at once, simplicity in the allotment of the grant; less variation in the annual grants, both very important improvements, and carrying out the spirit of our wishes, which we have long urged in vain; and a third advantage is to be found in the liberty of classification allowed to teachers. This is a substantial advantage, but I am bound to mention, on the other hand, a point deserving attention which, if attended to, may make this Code still more satisfactory. The Code makes increased requirements from schools, but the new scale of grants will fail to meet the requirements in many cases. There are advantages given to small rural schools, but there is a class of schools not sufficiently attended to yet doing good work which will not get assistance, schools in large scattered rural parishes with populations of about a thousand, more or less. In these parishes educational work is carried on with a struggle against great difficulties. Such parishes there are in Bucks and elsewhere, large and with a sparse and poor population, where education is carried on with very little assistance from the wealthier classes. I think it would be worth the attention of the Government whether in such places assistance could be given by way of special grant in some manner. I know it may be said if education cannot be carried on by voluntary subscription recourse may be had to a School Board, there are those who think this a panacea for all evils, and the way to bring about perfection in education. But this is not the doctrine generally held in such places, nor do I or many of my hon. Friends near me share in any such view. The inhabitants in these parishes are content with the present system of schools, and do not appreciate any addition to the rate burdens they have to bear. There can be no question but the rate system is more expensive than the voluntary system. Let me say a word upon what was said on the last occasion in Committee, I think by the hon. Member for Poplar (Mr. Buxton), to the effect that voluntary subscriptions have very much diminished. That is an exaggeration; they have not very much diminished. They have not increased *pro tanto* with the number of schools which, I am quite prepared to say, must be maintained by voluntary effort. But let it be remembered that a great deal of voluntary assistance is given which never appears in the balance sheet of school accounts. For instance, the building or land is often the property of the Lord of the Manor, or of a resident in the parish, and the free gift of such things constitutes a very important contribution, which yet finds no place in the balance sheet. Teachers' houses, too, are often freely given by landlords, but the very important contribution in the form of a remission of rent is not set out in the accounts. Many other methods might be mentioned in which assistance is given in money, or money's worth, towards education. All these are voluntary contributions, yet because they do not appear in the balance sheet of school accounts hon. Members are tempted to get up and say, "You call these voluntary schools, but you do not contribute towards the support of the schools as you should." Certainly it is the duty of church people to maintain their schools by voluntary contributions, but before we are subjected to criticism on this account let full credit be given for the actual contributions that are made. There is a point has been urged upon my right hon. Friend, and I think there will be general agreement that it deserves attention. The teaching of drawing is to be compulsory under the new Code after August 31, 1891. As a member of the late Royal Commission I congratulate the Vice President upon the acceptance of our recommendation in this respect; but, at the same time, it is well to consider how this will practically work. At the present moment it is absolutely impossible to teach drawing in every school without doing injustice to existing teachers or to the resources of the school. The present Code contains no drawing syllabus or regulations. The regulations, when introduced next year, as they presumably will be, should be so framed that school managers in schools where the present teachers are not qualified to teach drawing under the Science and Art Department may be allowed to introduce the teaching of drawing gradually. There are many schools admirably taught by male and female teachers, who yet are unable to teach drawing, and could not qualify themselves for that teaching within a limited time. Surely it would be a great hardship to a master or mistress that, though conducting the school admirably under all the requirements hitherto demanded, he or she should be sent to the right about because unable to teach drawing. This could be met by an Instruction to Inspectors that they shall be satisfied that the means of teaching drawing cannot at present be provided, and in the belief that the Department will have due regard to the interests of all I have nothing but thanks to offer for this change. With regard to the pension question, all who are interested in the *status* of the teachers must agree with the right hon. Gentleman in his expression of opinion that it is not in a satisfactory state. There are some small grievances connected with the teachers of 1851 which I think that the Government might well remedy. Is it worth while, for the sake of the small sum involved in this matter of persons, to encourage the grievance of a most deserving class of teachers? I would make an earnest appeal to the Government to act generously towards the claims of teachers engaged between 1851 and 1862, that they may receive the pensions to which they consider themselves entitled. There is another point upon which I shall find myself in opposition to the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir J. Lubbock). I cannot help thinking sometimes, as I listen to remarks upon the extension of the curriculum, that we are apt to be a little too ambitious. I do not wish to deprive any boy of these opportunities of getting all possible instruction from which he may derive advantage, but I think we have reached or exceeded the limit of education which should be provided from the public funds. I do not in the least grudge the fullest opportunities being afforded to clever boys by means of scholarships, or at the expense of their friends, but I think it is a mistake to overload the ordinary curriculum of elementary schools with subjects that are no part of elementary education in the ordinary acceptation of the term. This, I know, is not a popular doctrine, and it may shock my hon. Friend the Member for the London University, and others, but it is my decided view that all that the public are called upon to do is to provide the children of the working classes with full opportunity to read well, write well, and cipher. For that view, I have the authority of the late Mr. Bright, who advocated this view pretty much in the words I have used ["No, no!"] Well, the hon. Member for Bradford expresses dissent, and he can correct me if I am wrong in the opinion I attach to the words used by the late Mr. Bright. There is a great danger nowadays in people being led to suppose that the State should do everything for everybody. It is a most pernicious doctrine, but it is a doctrine that is largely applied to educational matters. While I would offer every reasonable facility for the development of education beyond the elementary education the State provides, yet it ought to be borne in mind that a great proportion of those who contribute through the rates towards this system of elementary education are but little richer than those whose children are thus educated, and it is most unfair to ask them, out of their scanty earnings, to contribute to what may be termed the luxuries of education rather than the necessaries. With these observations I conclude, as I began, with congratulations to my right hon. Friend. I think the Code of 1890 will be a happy epoch in our educational history.

*(5.20.) MR. S. SMITH (Flintshire): I had not the good fortune to hear the Vice President the other night when he made his interesting statement, but I have read his speech with care, and I can heartily congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the great advance the new Code indicates in the direction some of us have for years advocated. For the first time we have changes made which will have the effect of making education more practical, interesting, and attractive, and will strike at the root of that system of payment by results, which has been the curse of elementary education for so long. The teachers have long groaned under that system, and I am glad it is to be so largely modified. At the same time, of course, I admit that the State must take security for the due application of its money, and I am jealous of any alteration that may have the effect of lowering the efficiency of our schools through inefficient inspection. We must insist upon getting a full return for our money. It is quite possible to secure that without the odious grinding system of payment by results. I desire, also, to commend the Code for the increased liberty of classification it allows. There never was a more preposterous doctrine laid down than that children should advance in line year by year, no matter what the difference in their abilities, health, and social condition, and I am glad to find the Code recognises this. I thank the Vice President for the step he has taken in widening the curriculum of education, and I cannot agree with the remarks of the hon. Member for Oxford University (Mr. Talbot). This will have the effect of making education more attractive and interesting than in the past, when the memory was the sole faculty that was developed, and nothing was done to draw out the imaginative faculty. What we wish is that the children should leave school with a taste for further education and knowledge. A course of mere reading, writing, and ciphering, sickens a child with education; these are the means, and not the end. We would have a child leave school with his powers of observation stimulated and with some elementary knowledge in science, such as the hon. Baronet (Sir J. Lubbock) has done so much to inculcate. To this end I am glad to find drawing is to take a leading place. This, with such subjects as agriculture, cookery, laundry work, &c., will make the school a pleasant, interesting place for children, while it brings home to parents the advantages of the education of their children. Too long has our system of education been merely a strain upon the memory—a recollection of phrases, not a knowledge of things. I hail with delight this useful beginning of a better state of things. The true principle is that of the Kindergarten system, which I found in admirable operation at the Marlborough Street schools in Dublin. I wish especially to commend the Vice President of the Council for his courage in putting manual training into the Code. I believe that to be one of the greatest social reforms it is possible to carry out. There is in this country a great mass of unskilled labour. In our large towns there are tens and hundreds of thousands of people who are incapable of using their hands in any effective manner, and it will be impossible to put an end to the destitution prevailing in the East End of London, and our other large towns, until a good system of manual training is introduced. We have heard a good deal lately about the Sweating Commission. There is at present a mass of children who live in the streets, who rise to manhood and womanhood knowing nothing and capable of nothing, and as they grow up they become a part of the great mass of casual labour to be found in all large towns. The material upon which the sweater draws is just this class of helpless, casual labour, and we shall never put an end to sweating until we raise the condition of

this mass of people, and fit them for better work than these victims of the sweaters' dens are capable of. I rejoice at the introduction of manual training, because I believe it will be the means of raising to a more healthy level the social condition of this great mass of our population. I wish also to thank the Vice President for what he said with reference to continuation schools. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman "that there is complete unanimity with reference to these schools." It is surprising that the nation has been so sleepy and backward with respect to this matter, but a few of those on this side of the House have taken every opportunity of pressing the need of these continuation schools on the House of Commons, and I myself have introduced a Bill in three successive Sessions for their establishment. I thank the right hon. Gentleman for having adopted some of our suggestions, and for having so heartily responded to our appeals. I hold that such schools, if rightly expanded, would do more to rescue the children of the poor from the degradation of the London streets than anything else. There is nothing more lamentable than the utter waste of educational power which goes on under our present system. There never was a more wasteful system than ours. The average child at the age of 16 will be found to have forgotten almost everything he has learnt. The Vice President has admitted there is a huge gap between the time when a child leaves school and the time when he gets occupation, but it is the fault of the House of Commons that this huge gap occurs, and it is our business now to find a means of bridging it over. In rural districts the average age at which children leave school is about 11 years; in some districts they leave even at 10. This is, in my opinion, a shameful fact. In large towns it is somewhat better. In London the average is about 12½ years, though in many of the large towns it is not more than 11½ to 12. The very fact that children are allowed to leave school when they pass a certain standard encourages this system, and causes clever children to be leaving school earlier and earlier. A quick child can get through the Fourth Standard at the age of 10, and, what is worse, parents look upon it as a great object to get their children away from school. That system is utterly unsound. We want an age standard and not a qualification standard. Every other country of any degree of civilisation has an age standard. In Germany it is 14, with continuation schools up to 17. In Switzerland 15 is the earliest age at which a child leaves the elementary day school, and then there is an excellent system of continuation schools. In France 13 is the compulsory age, and in that country, also, there are excellent continuation schools. We are so far behind other countries that we ought to be ashamed, and that is the reason why in our large towns we have a social condition which most other countries would not tolerate. If we had a good system of continuation schools we could make some allowance for children leaving school early. Our present system of evening schools is all but a dead letter. The number of children attending them is so small that they are scarcely worth mentioning, and even the few who do attend, attend so irregularly that they derive little benefit. We are glad to think that these great changes have been made in the Code. Under the new Code the character of the education to be given in evening schools will be left largely to the discretion of the teachers. That is a step in the right direction, for the teachers will be able to provide for the real educational requirements of the children, and it will make the schools more attractive. But something more is wanted. Without some measure of compulsion we shall never get the mass of the children of the poor into our continuation schools. I know that many hon. Members do not altogether approve the suggestion of compulsion. But I say that the great bulk of the children of the working classes could, without difficulty, give an attendance of three nights a week during five months of the year. That is all we ask for. Why should there not be compulsion? I do not believe that the people will object to it, if useful practical education is given. The views of the country upon the question are more advanced than the Government think. With compulsion we should have not 40,000, but 400,000 children attending evening schools. Without it it is hopeless to expect that the education of slum children will be continued in evening schools. Nothing but compulsion will save these poor children from walking in the wretched footsteps of their parents. Girls need continuation schools quite as much as boys. The wretched plight of many poor women, sweated seamstresses and others, is due to the fact that they have had no educational training such as would fit them, for example, to be domestic servants. I think all girls should be instructed in domestic economy. I am glad that cookery is to be taught. If girls over 12 years of age are required to attend evening schools for two or three years there will be many fewer of these sad failures in life. At the Berlin Conference it was agreed the age of child labour ought to be raised, and that children under 12 should be forbidden to engage in industrial work. But in this country children are allowed to enter factories at the age of 10 years. I hold that our present half-time limit ought to be raised from the age of 10 to 12, or, at any rate, to 11. Another most needful change would be to make attendance at our day schools obligatory up to the age of 13. I am afraid that Germany will soon be ahead of us in labour regulations, as she is at present in the matter of education. I hope the Government, therefore, will go a little further than they have done; that they will raise the half-time age, and that they will make attendance at day schools obligatory up to the age of 13. I view their proposals for elementary education with satisfaction, but I cannot close my eyes to the fact that a great deal still remains to be done to put us ahead of other nations. We are allowing a vast amount of our national resources to be wasted. There are untold possibilities of progress in this country if but we would work the educational mine as we might do. I hope that the House will not be contented with the poor results we have so far obtained, but will insist on a much higher standard, and its necessary concomitant—a much happier social condition.

(5.57.) Colonel EYRE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough): I hope that when teachers are examined special regard will be paid to the question of their abilty to impart knowledge. In Germany teachers are required to pass high examinations in the art of teaching, and

the result is that, in imparting knowledge, the Germans are far superior to any other nation. A man may be a Senior Wrangler or a double first, but it does not follow that he can impart information to children. I trust the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council will give this point consideration.

*(5.58.) Sir J. LUBBOCK (London University): I had no intention of speaking on the present occasion; but as the hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Oxford has referred particularly to me, perhaps I may be allowed to say a few words. I was sorry to hear the remarks of the hon. Gentleman, because I had hoped we were practically agreed. The hon. Member signed the Report of the Royal Commission which recommended as essential subjects of instruction in elementary schools, not only reading, writing, and arithmetic, but also English history, English language, geography, and a knowledge of the elementary facts of Nature—that is to say, of elementary science. The right hon. Gentleman said he thought it sufficient to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic; but if we are to teach reading, it would be just as well that the children who learn to read should learn something that may be useful in their after life. We keep the children at school in London not so long as some of us might wish, but, at any rate, until they are 12 or 13 years of age, while in other districts in the country they are not kept quite so long at school, I am sorry to say. Nevertheless, an intelligent child of 11 or 12, and still more an intelligent child of between 12 and 13, is capable of learning much more than mere reading, writing, and arithmetic. They never will read in after life if reading is not made to interest them; and, remembering this, we are bound to give them the best education we can—that is to say, the kind of education which is likely to prove useful to them in after life. One of the great faults of the education we give to these children is, that it is not made sufficiently interesting to them, and is not carried on afterwards by continuation schools; so that the children soon forget what they have already learned. I fully concur in much that has been said in the excellent speech

of my hon. Friend (Mr. S. Smith), and I agree with him in thinking we might do a great deal more than is being done at present to make the education of our children interesting, and in that way to keep them for a longer period at school. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. Talbot) who has just spoken has alluded to what he calls the luxuries of education; but, as far as I am concerned, I do not regard mere reading, writing, and arithmetic as education at all. They are simply the preliminaries to education, and unless we teach our children something more than that, we can hardly say we have given them an education. I would remind my hon. Friend of the Report which he himself has signed, a Report expressing the unanimous opinion of the Commissioners on Education, that not only reading, writing, and arithmetic should be taught, but that some of the other things he just now so much deprecated were essential to the education of the children of this country. I am very reluctant to have it supposed that we are advocating anything which is Utopian or impossible, and I would remind the House that the Report of the Commission I have referred to — a Commission selected from those who had a practical knowledge of educational matters—was practically unanimous. I do not wish to go beyond the recommendations of that Commission, and I do not wish the idea to go forth that we differ in opinion on these points from the judgment given by that body. I know that a great deal has already been done with a view of making education more attractive in our elementary schools; and I trust the result of the New Code will be to give us a good deal more in the same direction. Of course, the New Code does not give us all we could wish. I regret that the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council has not been able to adopt all the recommendations of the Royal Commission, although I am glad to see he has been enabled to adopt many of them. We might, however, have hoped that on the points upon which the Commissioners were unanimous the Government would have given effect to what they recommended. Under the Code as it stands children can only be presented in two of the four subjects, namely, history, geography, elementary science, and the knowledge of English. These should be regarded as essential portions of the education given in all our elementary schools. Perhaps we could not make them obligatory at once, but, at any rate, we might encourage the teaching of these subjects in all the schools. I hope my right hon. Friend will consider this suggestion, as I feel assured that if he would adopt the recommendations of the Royal Commissioners in regard to these matters, he will very greatly improve the New Code, for which, even as far as it now goes, I have to thank him as a step taken in the right direction.

*(6.6.) VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Lancashire, N.E., Darwen): No one can have listened to the remarks of the hon. Baronet who has just sat down without a good deal of pleasure. But, for my part, I must rank myself rather as a disciple of my hon. Friend the Member for the University of Oxford than as a follower of the hon. Baronet opposite. The hon. Baronet, speaking of what he termed the luxuries of education, has stated that reading, writing, and arithmetic are not education at all; but surely we have gone very much further than that in reaching the realms of educational luxury. I have nothing to say against the best education that can be given at a reasonable expense to children of all classes in this country; but when such things as German and science of a somewhat advanced character are taught, I think the ratepayers have some reason to complain of the way in which their money is expended. When we consider the extraordinary point which the School Board rate of London has now reached the fact must be brought home to the minds of most people that we have very nearly reached the extreme limit to which the ratepayers can be called on to submit. Apart from the question of expense, I think that everyone who has taken part in this Debate has agreed that the great object is to give a good education at a reasonable expense—that is to say, such an education as is most suitable to the requirements of the children. I am sure we all hail with great satisfaction the steps that have been taken in this direction by the New Code which my right hon. Friend has

just laid upon the Table, especially with regard to the proposed instruction in such subjects as cookery and laundry work. I entirely concur in the view expressed by the hon. Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith) that the proposed extensions of our educational system are well worthy of the support and approval of this House. I desire to address myself for a few moments only to what I regard as one practical branch of the educational question, connected with what I have just referred to. There is a class of scholars in this country whose case particularly calls for attention in order that their needs may be met by our educational policy—I refer to those children called "half-timers." There is considerable difficulty in dealing with the half-time question. The hon. Member for Flintshire said he thought the age for half-timers ought to be raised, and for that matter, also, the age of the full-timers. That may or may not be the proper view of this point; but I submit that whatever age you may fix it becomes a very important question, and one well worthy of our consideration whether you can obtain exactly the same standard of education by the half-time system as you get where the full time of the scholar is given to educational work. It will be remembered that every scholar, whether a half-timer or a full-timer, must, according to the Code, be advanced one standard each year. Now, what does this mean? It simply means this: that with only half the ordinary time at their disposal, the half-time children have to attain the same standard as the children who are on full time. A certain number of children may be sufficiently clever to assimilate the necessary knowledge without difficulty. There are others, however, who are absolutely incapable of doing so at all; and between the two there is a class of children who can just reach the necessary standard under an immense amount of pressure on the parts of their parents and teachers—a pressure which is very detrimental both to their health and to the best interests of education. The Code does not deal with this difficulty. There are certain provisions applicable to schools entirely composed of half-timers, under which a certain amount of relief may be granted, but there are very few schools of that character in this country. There is in the Code the suggestion of freedom of classification, and this might reach those children who are not clever enough to assimilate the knowledge demanded of the cleverer children, who have to attain a particular standard. But, however far the classification system may be extended, it must be accompanied by certain restrictions. There are, I believe, cases in which the children are not advanced one standard a year, but these cases are very rare. Then there are the cases in which drawing must be taught. This is an exception from complete freedom of classification, and must tell very hardly on those children who have only half-time at their disposal. Then, again, there is the further difficulty occasioned by the pressure used by the parents to make the children reach the standard of full time exemption, which, of course, is greatly to the interest of the parents, a fact of which hon. Members who are connected with Lancashire must be well aware. The result of this over-pressure is injurious to the children, both in regard to their health and their education. There are two remedies which present themselves. One is, that in the case of the half-time scholars the standard should be lowered. The people of Lancashire are considered very clever and very shrewd, and a large proportion of the children are able to reach the full requirements even in half-time. There is every desire to give them the best education which can be afforded, and there is no reason in the world why they should be condemned to a lower standard of education than is demanded for children in other parts of the country. I, therefore, submit that a lower standard is not the proper remedy. There is another suggestion. It is that the instructions to the Inspectors should be less rigid in the case of children on half-time than in the case of children on full time. That is to say, in awarding the grant, they should not insist upon the same proportion of half-timers reaching the required standard that they would do in the case of the whole time scholars. I know the attention of my right hon. Friend has been called to this question. I know that he has in many respects sympathy for those children who are engaged in the practical work of life. Notwithstanding what has fallen from the hon. Gentleman the Member for Flintshire, I venture to think that the actual work of life is a far more valuable education for children than can be derived for pushing them forward, in spite of the limited time at their disposal, to a higher standard than they are actually obliged to reach. I have only to join in the chorus of thanks which have been given to my right hon. Friend. I thank him especially that he has found himself able to meet us on so very many points to which we called attention on the Code last year. But there is one point to which I should like to call attention. The right hon. Gentleman is aware that last year we were very much interested in inducing the Government to establish a fixed grant, and there can be nothing more complete up to a certain point than the fixed grant which he has established. I have to thank him very much for the policy which he has adopted. But I would like to make this demand. There are two Articles which do not seem to be consistent. Article 87 provides that the grant is not to be refused except under grave circumstances and after due warning, and it gives the right of appeal to the Chief Inspector. Article 92 provides that unless the general conditions of the Code are fulfilled, the Department have the power, after considering all the circumstances, of not paying the grant or a portion of the grant. What I suggest is that the principle of Article 86 as to giving due warning should be incorporated in Article 92, so that the grant can never be diminished except under grave circumstances, and after due warning, with the right of appeal. I shall not attempt to go into the controversy between the voluntary and Board schools. I confine myself to a protest against the view which was so often expressed, that the voluntary subscription has diminished. It is not the fact. The voluntary subscriptions have not sensibly diminished at all. During the first 10 or 12 years of the present school system in this country the voluntary subscription increased enormously. From that time they have been practically stationary. There was a very slight diminution at one time, but the tendency to diminish came to an end last year. But it must be remembered that during the period of slight diminution the increased endowments of the Church of England schools more than compensated for the diminution of the voluntary subscriptions. I am well aware that part of the increased endowments is due to the action of the Charity Commissioners, but that does not account for the whole of the increase of the endowments. I agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Oxford University that it would be a matter of immense regret if the voluntary subscriptions diminished, but I hope to see them still increase. Still, I must say that when sneers are made against the voluntary schools, that I consider them more valuable because of their voluntary management than their subscriptions. But I will not go into the old controversy, and merely making my protest against the charge that voluntary subscriptions are diminishing, I conclude, as I began, by thanking the right hon. Gentleman for the Code he has laid on the Table of the House.

*(6.25.) Mr. MATHER (Lancashire, S.E., Gorton): Sir, I feel that by the Code which the right hon. Gentleman has brought forward, a great step in advance has been made in the cause of education. I congratulate the Vice President on the courage he has displayed and on his sagacity and skill in drawing up a Code which has been able to pass through so many difficult positions raised on former occasions. The House will remember that, about the termination of last Session, it was only possible to pass a Technical Education Bill which dealt with a part of the great question of our national system of education. I am happy to know that there are hon. Friends of mine on this side of the House, who feel that this Code completes the scheme foreshadowed last year, and that from the infants' school up to the secondary degree in technical instruction, we may look forward to a system of national instruction in the best sense of the word, which will enable the people of England in the future, as regards intelligence, industry, skill, and enterprise to compete with the most educated nations of the world. In the Instructions to Inspectors, the phrase occurs "to encourage variety, freedom, and breadth" in education. That is in contradiction to the sterility which has been

characteristic of our system for the last 20 years. I take the words "variety, freedom, and breadth" as indicating the spirit of the Department, and educationists should bear those words in mind when any sentence occurs in the Code which they do not think clear. I believe the hearty and enthusiastic speech with which the right hon. Gentleman introduced the Code shows that he desires that the utmost benefit shall be derived from it by both teachers and children. There are three points of the Code which are entirely new—the training of teachers, the position given to elementary science, and the position given to manual training. In these three steps is to be found the very best possible instruction for the children of the working classes. I do not think that the Department intends to introduce the Kindergarten system pure and simple; but there is sufficient in the Code to indicate that it is the basis on which the instruction of children in infants' schools will be framed. The Kindergarten system is not simply a method of entertaining children. It is based on a philosophic consideration by Froebel of the condition of a child's mind. I see in the Code a distinct organic connection between the higher forms of education and the lower or infant forms. It is suggested that the Kindergarten method and kindred methods shall be employed in the teaching of science. The schools, if properly administered, will be all that can be desired to enable that method to become part and parcel of the national educational system of the country. Manual training, allied to drawing, has been shown to be most desirable—an almost indispensable—thing in our elementary schools. If I am over-rating this departure the Vice President will correct me; but, as I understand, this system of Froebel's beginning with the Kindergarten is to be allied in the earlier days of the child's training with the three R's, and on that will be built that manual training which will develop the best faculties both of hand and eye and brain. In my opinion, these are the gems of the new Code, and I believe the Code will be administered in the spirit which I find breathing throughout it. I only wish that the Member for Oxford University and the noble Lord near him would travel in America and Germany, and there see what manual and technical education is and its effect on the after life of the people. I wish they could see the great elementary schools of Philadelphia, where the Kindergarten system is now gradually becoming part and parcel of the education of the people. Under the new Code we may have a more perfect system even than that of Philadelphia. Probably the half-time exemptions will be less a matter for consideration in the future, in consequence of the manual training, which will make elementary schools more attractive to children than they are at present. Instead of our having to make the allowances suggested by the noble Lord opposite (Lord Cranborne), who thinks half-timers should be treated more leniently than other pupils, I hope the effect of the new Code will be to extend the school life of every child a year or two at least, and that half-timers will not begin at 10, but at 11 or 12 years of age. It will be the greatest possible satisfaction to all true men and women throughout the country if the effect of the new Code, well administered, is to induce parents, without further compulsion, to extend the school life of their children. I believe the education under the new Code will surpass that given in other countries. Both in America and in Germany manual training is carried out chiefly by voluntary effort. But the system of general education in the latter country is much more enlightened than ours. Matthew Arnold said that was due to the training of the teachers, and I am delighted to find that the Vice President has adopted much of the German principle, and has, by the day colleges, encouraged teachers to pass through a collegiate course of education at very small expense, probably by this process enabling this country to derive from the great Universities and Colleges advantages similar to those derived by Germany. Owens College, at Manchester, has already offered to the Education Department all its advantages for the benefit of teachers in the North of England. I hope the Vice President will accept the invitation so offered. The more closely we ally popular education to the highest teaching institutions the sooner we shall bring to bear upon the children of the working classes those principles and influences which will refine them morally and in their general daily conduct, and enable them to be more fitted for the occupations they have to follow, and the more fitted to add to the national progress, the prosperity, and commercial advantages which we desire for the Empire.

*(6.40.) MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W., West): I refrain from joining in the chorus of commendation with which this Bill has been received, and I am not at all sure that the right hon. Baronet the Vice President of the Council will not be grateful to me for pointing out the desirability of caution, and of reminding the Committee that great expectations are raised, which are sometimes not fulfilled, when a great chorus of praise bursts out on any particular measure. Perhaps, from the fact that I am a Scotchman, I always like to reserve my praise until I have seen a measure under trial, and can speak from experience as to its working. I reflect, too, in this instance, that it is the children of the working classes, of whom we have heard something this afternoon, who are to benefit by the Bill, and, therefore, the opinion of the working classes will weigh more with me than the opinions of hon. Members of this House, no matter how qualified to speak on matters of education. One or two observations that fell from the hon. Member who has just sat down rather puzzled me. He seemed to hope that our system of education could be gone on with without compulsory measures, and I am not quite sure how he can reconcile that to the praise he gives the Bill itself. He would almost seem to be in doubt as to whether this Code is the result of voluntary effort, or whether or not it is proposed to ask the sanction of Parliament to it. If the sanction of the House is to be given to it, I must say I fail to see the force of the hon. Member's observations. I heartily concur in the observations that fell from the hon. Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith) as to the time to which children might fairly remain at school; and I think the hon. Member's observations have been most unjustly interpreted by the noble Lord opposite (Viscount Cranborne), when he said that the hon. Member wished to strain the mental faculties of the children. If I apprehended rightly what the hon. Member for Flintshire wished to convey the very reverse was in his mind. I was glad to see there were special provisions contained in the Bill with reference to technical education, not because I wish to see the children of the working classes merely made more efficient machines for piling up profits for their employers in future times, but because I think the working classes of this country should be placed on an artistic and æsthetic level with the working classes of Germany and France, which is a thing we cannot claim at the present moment. There is to be a special grant given for technical education; and I want to know how that technical education is to be taught. Is it to be taught by school teachers or by trained artisans? I must say that the idea of ordinary school teachers dealing with subjects which can only be properly understood by men who have served six or seven years of an apprenticeship to a trade is not one that I, personally, contemplate with much confidence. If this education is to be imparted by school teachers, I want to have the right hon. Gentleman's opinion as to how long these teachers are likely to take in qualifying in order to be able to give efficient technical instruction, such as would be given by a skilled artisan or draughtsman who had passed through the whole curriculum of learning his trade and had exercised that trade for some time. Does the right hon. Gentleman know how drawing is taught in our Board Schools—that is to say, drawing which is intended for technical training? One would think that it would be from machines, or models of parts of machines, so that it could be applied to practical purposes; but we find that in the Board Schools of London and other parts of the country nothing of the kind is done. The children draw from copies, and it is ridiculous to suppose that by that means reliable technical knowledge can be imparted. If what I have stated is correct of the vast bulk of the Board schools of the country, I want to know what sort of practical work will be turned out by children who are so instructed? Technical drawing in such a form as this becomes not only a farce, but a loss of time, both to teachers and pupils. Some time ago the London School Board wanted two pattern makers to teach woodwork. Pattern makers are a highly paid class of men,

who obtain from £2 to £3 a week. The salary given by the London School Board was £75 a year each; and I find that, instead of getting two skilled pattern makers, the Board obtained the services of two common carpenters. The Board was obliged to engage two school teachers to oversee the carpenters. I ask the Committee, could anything be more ridiculous? The salaries paid to the superintendents, who were ordinary Board School teachers, was £150. It is quite clear that no technical education could possibly have been imparted by the Board School teachers.

*SIR R. TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham): To what school does the hon. Member refer?

MR. C. GRAHAM: I refer to several of the London schools. It would be invidious, perhaps, to name them; but I shall be happy to furnish the hon. Gentleman with the names privately. What is wanted is real practical instruction, and such instruction can only be successfully imparted by men who have passed a considerable portion of their lives in practical work. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will see that the right men are employed. I tell the right hon. Gentleman that in consequence of the system which has been adopted there is a feeling of resentment growing up amongst practical men, and that many of them are becoming enemies of the educational system.

*(6.57.) SIR B. SAMUELSON (Oxfordshire, Banbury): The hon. Member who has just spoken appears to me to have confused two things—the teaching of a trade and the training which can properly be imparted to young children. I should be very sorry if there was any intention out of the proceeds of any Government grant to undertake the teaching of trades. It would be unjust to teach one or more trades by means of public money without teaching every trade, and that would be impossible. I have witnessed the manual instruction in some of the London School Boards, and I am able to assert that the training which is imparted by elementary teachers is of such a character as to be well worth the time devoted to it.

*MR. C. GRAHAM: Do I understand the hon. Gentleman to say that the instruction imparted in any school in London he has himself visited is such as would enable a skilled man to make machines from the drawings done by the scholars?

*SIR B. SAMUELSON: Certainly not, and I should be very sorry to see instruction of that kind given. But such instruction is given as to insure that the eye of the pupil is correct, and that he understands the tools he is using. I have myself seen such instruction given by elementary teachers who have been trained in the central schools of the City and Guilds of London. I have also seen similar instruction attempted to be imparted by artisans, and I believe the instruction given by the elementary teacher was far more valuable than that given by the artisan. The reason is that artisans do not understand teaching, whereas schoolmasters do. I am very glad, indeed, to find that attention is being drawn to the question of making drawing practical instead of—as it is in many instances—extremely perfunctory. There, I think, the hon. Gentleman has hit the right nail on the head. If, however, he will visit the Sheffield higher elementary school or the Board Schools at Manchester, Keighley, or Birmingham, he will find that pupils are taught first to make a correct drawing of an object they have afterwards to execute in wood or iron. That is a kind of drawing I should like to see carried further among the higher students, but one cannot begin with that. You must begin by training the pupils to copy from models instead of from drawings, and I hope that encouragement will be given by the Inspectors to teachers to use models instead of drawing from the flat. There is no such thing in France as drawing from the flat; all drawings being made from models.

*SIR R. TEMPLE: It is the same in London.

*SIR B. SAMUELSON: I am very glad to hear it. I should have been glad to see the Article in the Code on the question of drawing a little more stringent than it is. If I remember rightly, what the Article says is, in substance, that where there is no provision for teaching drawing, drawing is not to be taught. Provision can be made, and ought to be made, even in remote villages, by combination for teaching drawing, and it is a matter of so much importance that I do not think it ought to be left to the discretion of managers. I hope the time is not far distant when drawing will be made obligatory for girls as well as boys. I should not have risen at all to address the Committee on this subject had it not been for some of the observations which fell from the noble Lord the Member for Darwen (Viscount Cranborne). He called attention to the difficulties attending half-time education. In my opinion, there is only one mode in which those difficulties can be met—it is to prevent half-time children going to work until they have carried their education further than they do at present. At Bradford children are allowed to go to work after they have passed the Second Standard.

*MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan): That is not so now.

*SIR L. PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.): They have to pass Standard III.

*SIR B. SAMUELSON: Well, Standard III. is bad enough, and I am glad the authorities at Bradford have been shamed into some improvement. In foreign countries children are not allowed to go to work before they are 12 years of age. That is the true remedy. Keep your children compulsorily at school up to a reasonable age and until they give some assurance that they have profited by the education they have received. Do not let them go until they are qualified to enter into industrial life. When you have done that coax them into an industrial school if you can. I should like to keep them till they are 14, but at all events keep them until they are 13, and if they have not reached a certain standard, let them be compelled to attend continuation classes. The greatest latitude of instruction should, I think, be allowed in continuation schools. It is absurd to think that young men of 17 or 18 years of age will be tempted into school if they have to undergo the drudgery of the three R's. The Code has gone a long way in offering inducements to people to attend evening schools. It was time that inducements were offered, because the number of scholars in our continuation schools was dropping off year by year, and, in fact, the schools were becoming obsolete. There is just one other point in connection with the Code I desire to mention. Everybody has praised my right hon. Friend, and I gladly join in the praise bestowed upon him; but there is a little timidity, and I think in some cases unnecessary timidity, in the course he has taken. The point to which I now wish to call attention to is that of the day training colleges. For a long time we have been anxious to see such colleges established. I believe they will not only be good in so far as they will cheapen the training of our elementary teachers, and thereby enable us to obtain assistant teachers at a reasonable rate instead of relying upon pupil teachers, but I think they will also introduce into the teaching profession a class of persons whom we ought to be very glad to see in that profession. I allude more especially now to a higher grade of female teachers, and I should be glad, indeed, if every encouragement were given to our University Colleges and other collegiate institutions to take up the training of teachers, both male and female. In the Code I find a limit is imposed as to the number of students. I hope that is a limitation which will not be continued in future years. [An hon. MEMBER: It is only for this year.] It is very clear that this is meant as a protection for the old colleges. The old colleges need no protection. They do their work well, and I think they will be able to hold their own with the day training colleges which we are now about to establish. They have great advantages. Their buildings exist through the liberality of the denominations, and they have very considerable grants from the Government. They have a prestige, they have done good work, and they need no protection. There is no reason whatever why there should be any limit to the number of students who should be allowed to be trained in day colleges. I was glad to hear it was only for this year. Again, I am glad that encouragement has been given to the smaller country schools. The additional grant to those schools will enable them to afford a better education than it has hitherto been in their power to afford. In many cases the clergyman has had to bear the whole cost of those schools. Generally speaking, the schools are denominational schools. They are no worse for that; indeed, School Boards in small country districts are by no means good institutions. Board Schools are of no use except in tolerably large localities, and if they are really to be serviceable in rural districts, small parishes ought to be combined in order to make large districts. I have heard of one School Board the Chairman of which is unable to write his own name. Such a School Board only tends to cause the School Board system to fall into disrepute. But there is one thing which small schools can do, whether denominational or School Board, and that is combine together in order to obtain competent instruction in drawing and other subjects which cannot be expected to be imparted satisfactorily by the ordinary elementary schoolmaster. An excellent point in the Code is the provision that if a pupil teacher, after a certain term, shows he is not likely to succeed in the profession, his indentures are to be cancelled. I hope that if I have in any way criticised the Code my right hon. Friend will not think I am less grateful to him than others who have spoken. I am sure the country will be grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for the improvements which the Code will effect in our system of elementary education, and I believe he himself will in future years look back with pleasure to the time when he introduced this Code.

*(7.18.) MR. J. SPENCER BALFOUR (Burnley): I am anxious to enforce the appeal made by the noble Lord the Member for Darwen (Viscount Cranborne) in respect to half-timers. His Lordship's reactionary opinions on the subject of education generally may not induce the Committee to regard his recommendations in reference to half-timers with much favour; but I submit that if we are really anxious to secure effective education in this country we must face the half-time difficulty. I speak as an old member of a School Board, and as one who for some years had to administer the compulsory clauses of the Act. Much as I dislike the half-time system, unwilling as I am to see the half-time system extended, I am bound to say that without that system there would be no chance of enforcing the compulsory attendance clause. That is the case in the South of England, but it is particularly the case in the North of England. I assure hon. Members who have spoken about the attractions of the new Code that parents are not influenced, and often, unfortunately, cannot be influenced, by the attractions of a new Code, when they are arranging the attendance of their children at school. For instance, to expect a widow with two or three boys growing up to manhood to keep her children at home a year or two longer than she is absolutely obliged when they have the opportunity of going out and earning something, is to expect more than human nature is capable of. We ought to remember that practical instruction in useful employment is by no means the least valuable part of education. I should be the last to limit the amount of the education of our children. I entirely differ from the noble Lord in talking about what is the most suitable amount of education. In my judgment, the most suitable amount of education is the best we can give. At the same time, we must face the fact that in the North of England, and in Lancashire especially, there is an enormous number of half-timers. The Vice President of the Council will be willing to admit that the efficiency and the success of the Elementary Education Act has been very marked in Lancashire, and that in some districts where the half-time system prevails most there are some of the best schools in the country. That is especially the case in Burnley, the town I represent. One of the schools there has received the highest grant which it is possible for a school to receive. At the same time a very large proportion of the children are half-timers. I trust the Vice President of the Council will see his way to meet the reasonable wishes of the school teachers in this matter. It should be remembered that the teachers are very heavily weighted when they have this large number of half-timers on their hands. They cannot refuse to receive such pupils; but it is very hard, indeed, upon them when the Inspector comes down in cold blood and expects that the half-time child shall be able to pass as wide an examination as the child who has attended full time. As to the qualification of the teachers, I congratulate the Vice President of the Council on the proposals contained in the New Code; and so far from agreeing with the hon. Member for Leicester, that any stigma is attached to the teachers who are not able to take charge of pupil

teachers, I have been in communication with many teachers throughout the country, and am in a position to say that they recognise the wisdom of the proposed alterations. With regard to the test and qualification of half-timers, perhaps in the course of the next 12 months the right hon. Gentleman will be able to consider what that test and qualification shall be. In the original Code we had no experience whatever of the various details of compulsion, and, therefore, we had to adopt a somewhat crude qualification for half-timers; but I submit that instead of having a system that shall vary in different parts of the country it would be well for the Education Department to re-consider the whole question of half-timers, especially as to what should be their qualification. I am disposed to think that age and number of previous attendances at school should be their only qualification. No child should be competent to obtain a half-time certificate until he has made a given number of full attendances at school during his life, and no child under a certain age should be removed from full school instruction, unless the condition and necessities of the parents require him to be so removed, nor should any child be so removed until he has an immediate prospect of profitable and useful employment.

(7.25.) MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): I listened with special interest to the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Darwen (Viscount Cranborne), because it brought forcibly to my mind the progress we have made in the cause of education. We have made great progress during the past 20 years, and all Vice Presidents of the Council will have to make up their minds that they cannot listen to any retrogressive proposals. I remember that when I was one of a deputation who waited upon Mr. Forster I gave it as my opinion that the time would come, and I hoped it was not far distant, when the cost of education in the country all told would be equal to the cost of the Army. That idea was ridiculed at the time, but we are gradually creeping up to that standard. A good deal has been said about the possibilities under this Code, but I think one of the results of the Code will be to bring home to the minds of the people the absolute and imperative necessity of extending the age up to which children shall compulsorily attend school. Moreover, the Code is more in accordance with common sense than any previous Code, and, to me, it is very curious how the Code goes back, so to speak, to the principles of the old educationalists, or rather of those men of the 16th and 17th centuries who could better lay claim to the title of professors of the science of education than the men of the present day seem able to do. The great German educationalist, Froebel, said—

> "Often teach the same thing. Nothing should be learnt by heart. Give time for play and recreation. Give no rule before you have given examples. Teach no language out of grammars but out of authors."

And in the 16th century it was advised that teaching should be more in accordance with Nature, that pictures or object lessons should be adopted, and that not words but things should be taught. It is very curious to see how we are now adopting this natural system of teaching. But I rose to refer to one particular point. The Code provides for the development of scientific and technical education in towns, but it seems to me that the same kind of teaching in rural schools, particularly in rural night schools, is not up to the mark compared with the importance of the industry in which rural children are greatly interested. As a manufacturing country we are greatly concerned in technical education in our industrial centres. Hon. Members continually and rightly urge that if we are to maintain our manufacturing supremacy, scientific training must be well attended to. But there is not an equal concern on the part of the Department or the country in the teaching of agriculture, the oldest, the largest, and one of the most honourable industries in the world. Considering the difficulties under which the small rural schools labour, I think the Government ought to treat such schools with liberality. The right hon. Gentleman has referred to the changes and advantages in the curriculum by the introduction of elementary science in regard to agriculture, and such changes there are, but I regret that their value is rather in the recognition of the importance of the subject than in any sufficient practical means of carrying out the instruction. When we see the number of children brought up for examination under

Standard IV., and when we note what a falling off in numbers there is in examinations under Standard V., we realise what a large number of children leave school after passing Standard IV. We may take it for granted that a great number of those who leave school at this stage are in the rural districts. I am not attaching blame to anyone for this, but I think that, noting the fact that an extraordinary number of these children come from the rural districts, it is obvious that the teaching of agriculture as a specific subject is of very little use in rural schools, because the instruction does not begin until the children are in the Fifth Standard. It is quite true that under the head of Elementary Science 5, 6, 7, and 8 there are subjects in which agriculture is included, but what I contend is, that when children leave at the Fourth Standard there is enormous waste to begin with, and the children leave just at the time when they would, if they continued at school, enter upon the very valuable teaching that is afforded under the teaching of science and agriculture as specific subjects. Take one instance of the necessity of teaching of agricultural subjects. Some of the simplest discoveries in science, as applied to agriculture, are unknown, because the rural population have never been taught. I know, for instance, districts in Berkshire, and the same practice obtains in many other parts of the country, where the people continue to smother their bees, simply because they have never been taught any plan to supersede that wasteful, barbarous, antiquated proceeding. What I should like in some future Code, if the Vice President could see his way clearly, would be to declare every school where the Board or Attendance Committee put the Fourth Standard as the end of compulsory education, an inefficient school. It really is inefficient, that is to say, it does not turn out the article, to use a manufacturing term, that is expected, and the consequence is the failure in that instance goes to add to the cost of the general education of the country. To use the manufacturer simile, if he has a certain number of failures or imperfect specimens these add to the cost of those he effectively produces, and so these examples of imperfect education make our educational system so expensive as compared with the actual results. I would make the teaching of agriculture in rural schools compulsory. It is compulsory in Ireland, throughout the whole of the National Schools, beyond a certain standard, and I notice that in 1888 there were 84,786 boys in primary schools examined in agriculture, 60 per cent. of whom passed. They have very valuable text books which are used in the schools. In France, too, agriculture is taught in the primary schools, that is to say, the simple facts and processes connected with agriculture. We, too, should recognise the importance of bringing up our boys in a plain and practical manner to some knowledge of the greatest industry of our country, which needs all the help we can give it. Only one point more I wish to mention, and that is in reference to reading books. From the examination I have given them I do not think they are the most suitable for their purpose. The right hon. Baronet the Member for London University (Sir J. Lubbock) said this evening that children in learning to read must read something, and it would be far better if in our country schools the children read in books dealing with the natural life and phenomena around them. No better subjects can be found. There is all natural history to draw upon, and no fairy tale can be more interesting than the explanation and elucidation of Nature's work being carried on around them. To illustrate what I mean, I remember a few months ago catching a boy as he was running from school, and I said to him, "What is the name of that tree?" The boy did not know. I question if he had really seen the tree he passed four times a day. This is an example of how the real object of education had failed; the development of observation, the awakening of interest, the habit of inquiry had not been touched by his school instruction. The right hon. Baronet (Sir J. Lubbock) has shown the interest there is in the study of subjects we find around us, the habits of bees and insects, and subjects which awaken a country boy's interest to his after advantage. I wonder that no enterprising publisher has provided, for reading in our elementary schools, books such as would arrest the attention of boys by dealing with natural objects with which they are familiar. I remember in my younger days, when I had a good deal to do with the teaching in a class of schools which I am glad to say has departed, I mean the old ragged school, that you might examine a boy in the multiplication table or other elementary school subject, as then taught, and put him down as the biggest fool in the school, but the moment you mentioned an animal, bird, insect, or some natural object which may have happened to come within his observation, you might see his mental faculties awakening, and you might see there were possibilities in him worthy of development. But I regret that I have occupied so much of the time of the Committee. What I wish to urge upon the Vice President is that he should give further facilities for the teaching of the elements of agriculture in our rural schools, and, if he can see his way, I would urge him to make it a compulsory subject in this country, as it is in Ireland, in France, and in some other countries.

(7.40.) MR. CONWAY (Leitrim, N.): In regard to the subject of agriculture I should be glad to see it made part of the ordinary work of the school, and not limited to standards above Standard IV. We know that in some districts schools have no standard above Standard IV. When, however, hon. Members talk of mere reading, writing, and arithmetic, they create a false impression of the character of the examinations in the schools. To pass in reading, does not mean that passages shall be read with proper pronunciation and emphasis; the reader may give the passage with all the elocution of a Henry Irving, or of our best public speakers, but unless he knows something of the matter he reads he will be unable to pass. The best work in primary schools is done under Standards I. to IV. and for the hon. Member (Mr. Collings) to advise the Vice President to treat every school as inefficient which does not provide for examinations in Standards V. and VI. is a ridiculous recommendation on the face of it. The hon. Member went on to talk of reading books, but we have a staff of Inspectors, who, with 20 years' experience, have given general satisfaction, and yet the hon. Member would have books adopted outside the recommendations of these Inspectors. It is all very well for the hon. Member to go back to the 15th or 16th century, and bring us the result of his reading, but those of us who have had intimate observation of educational work will not be convinced by the hon. Member's arguments and illustrations. The hon. Member tells us a tale of a boy who did not know the name of a tree, but very possibly the lad was alarmed and bewildered by being suddenly accosted, and may have taken the hon. Member for an Inspector, and possibly anticipated punishment for being found outside school. I venture to join in the congratulations to the Vice President upon the introduction of his New Code, and I may say that during his term of office the administration of the right hon. Gentleman has been generally to the satisfaction of school managers. The New Code is elastic, and it may become expansive. It is not a Teacher's Code, it is an Inspector's Code, and as such is elastic and expansive. From the pecuniary point of view I think the New Code will not pay so well as the present Code—schools will not earn the same amount of grant. But the power of the Inspector for the encouragement of good work will be increased. He will have the power of going two or three times to a school in the course of a year, and of confidentially advising master or mistress. The line of demarcation between Inspector and master is removed, and the latter may have the full advantage of the experience of the Inspector. But when hon. Members congratulate themselves upon the system of payment by results being abolished, an examination of the Code shows that is a declaration that cannot be sustained. The merit grant is practically retained. What does the fixed grant mean? What do you mean by the 12s. 6d. and 14s. grants and the 9s. and 7s. grants, and, in the case of infant schools, the 2s. and 4s. 6d. grants? Payment by results is not really done away with. Inspectors should have power to determine whether a school is efficient or not, and upon that a fixed grant upon the average attendance ought to be embodied in the Code. Payment by result is retained and classification is retained, although the right hon. Gentleman has explained that a Circular to Inspectors shall be issued modifying instructions in this regard. We want full liberty of classification, and the periodical visits of Inspectors, intelligently applied, should enable teachers to cover any difficulties in classification. The Code ought to be radically altered; we ought to have a fixed grant on average attendance, and the Instructions to Inspectors should do away with sample or individual examinations. The Inspector takes a third of the boys present and passes an opinion upon the result of his examination. Is not this individual examination? I regret that the right hon. Gentleman has not had the courage to tackle the question of the 17s. 6d. limit; he has made special exceptions, but he keeps the 17s. 6d. limit. The right hon. Gentleman has not taken into account the immense sacrifices made by voluntary schools; why should he not do away with the 17s. 6d. limit in regard to all subjects called "specific?" The results would not be paid for until the Department was perfectly satisfied. Why, then, when a voluntary school is able to produce results satisfactory to the Department and to the admiration of the country, should not the Department be generous and give the school the full benefit of the grant? I regret the right hon. Gentleman has not had the courage to grapple with this limit, which spoils the effect of much the New Code effects. There is one point I wish to put before the right Gentleman; it is a small point; but there is much irritation in connection with it, and I do not think it has yet been touched upon—I refer to Article 89, the publication of the Report, which provides that the balance sheet shall be published immediately after the receipt of the Report of the Inspector, and a Copy of Form 9 shall be posted on the school door or other public place for 14 consecutive days. I am surprised that attention has not been drawn to this. It seems to assume that all school buildings have enclosed areas in front from which the public are excluded; but in our towns the buildings often abut directly upon the street, and managers are asked to publish their accounts on the school doors for the satisfaction of every inquisitive passer-by. Managers do not fear the closest investigation of their accounts on the part of a Government official. A public auditor should be appointed, and to him these accounts should be submitted, and with his Report the Department ought to be satisfied. There is no reason why the managers should be called upon to expose their accounts to every curiosity-monger, to every individual who may possibly have a quarrel with the management, to every young man whose attentions to a school mistress or teacher may be influenced by the amount of salary she receives. The scrutiny of an auditor ought to satisfy the Department, and I do not think the managers should be required to gratify mere curiosity. One other matter I have to mention, and that is in reference to the old teachers; and, by way of preliminary observation, I am glad to find that the right hon. Gentleman anticipates within the next few years we may have a general superannuation scheme for teachers. Already some little discussion has taken place as to a section of this class, but I want to see a whole-hearted and not a piece-meal scheme. We know from Reports that 18,000 teachers receive no more than £75 a year, and large numbers receive £50 and less. How is it possible on such payments to provide for old age, when worn out in the service? In 1846, when I may say the present system of education had its commencement, the Privy Council passed a Minute to the effect that it was expedient to make provision in certain cases for retiring allowances to schoolmasters and mistresses, and that the Lord President should draw up regulations to that end. Following this, in December of that year, another Minute was issued establishing a system of pensions to teachers in certain cases on the basis of two-thirds of the amount of salary. This was modified in 1857, and in 1862, under Mr. Robert Lowe's Code, these payments were abolished. Now, I know perfectly well, for I was myself personally interested as a teacher, what the effect has been. I remember that I was induced to join the profession under the promise that, after a certain term of service, I should be entitled to a pension, and between 1858, when I entered the service, and 1862, all teachers were engaged on similar terms. The unfairness with which teachers had been treated was generally recognised, and led to the passing of a Motion in 1884 and the granting of pensions in 232 cases of engagements in the service up to 1851. I would strongly urge upon the Vice President that he should entertain the proposition made by the hon. Member for Oxford University (Mr. Talbot), that the State should keep faith with those teachers who were engaged in the service up to 1862, and they should receive the pensions they are fully entitled to. The Code is not all that could be desired; but it is a step in the right direction, and, so far, I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman, and look forward to a further advance which will produce a Code satisfactory to all engaged or interested in the education of the country.

*(8.0.) Mr. JASPER MORE (Shropshire, Ludlow): I wish to draw attention to a detail in the proposed Code which has hitherto escaped much observation, the proposal to introduce physical training into our schools. This is a matter in which I and others in my constituency have long been much interested, and we have exercised such influence as we possess to obtain its introduction into the Code. For 40 years the Wenlock Olympian Society has been supporting physical training, and trying to obtain its recognition in national schools. Last year there was a Conference of Frenchmen held in Paris, interested in the introduction of English and American games into French schools. A Society with that object was formed, and they have this year published a Report which contains the results of experiments carried out at Wenlock in my constituency as to the effect of physical education upon children of the same age. In this Report it is stated that children, exercised in the schools with Indian clubs, horizontal bars, the vaulting horse, &c., increased in breadth of chest two inches, while other children in similar circumstances increased only half an inch through drilling. It is satisfactory to see the taste for physical exercises is increasing in the Metropolis. During the Whitsuntide recess the Member for Leeds presided over an exhibition of athletic exercises at the Agricultural Hall, honoured by the presence of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and I am informed that athletic exercises for young girls are among the most popular purposes for which the hall of the Peoples' Palace is used. The carrying out of the details of such exercises in schools no doubt presents difficulties. There is the capacity of teachers for giving instruction, and the cost of apparatus and other matters which would require Departmental consideration; but, without trespassing on the time of the Committee, I add my congratulations to the right hon. Gentleman upon the recognition of physical training for the first time in the Code, and if he can see his way to proceed a little further in the same direction he will greatly add to our obligations.

*(8.5.) Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): In the first place, I should like to give my hearty support to what has fallen from the hon. Member for Shropshire in regard to physical education, and I sincerely hope the right hon. Gentleman may see his way to strengthen this point still further in his next Education Code. The hon. Member for North Leitrim has dealt so fully and ably with the questions upon which teachers are specially interested that I do not venture to follow him. The answer given by the Vice President in reference to the saving of the rights of existing certificated teachers and the instructions to Inspectors renders it unnecessary that I should touch upon these matters. With regard to the question of audit, it really seems to me the proposal in the Code is insufficient on one point. What is required, and what would be only just in some parishes, such as that wherein I live, is that there should be ready access at any time by any ratepayer to the accounts of the school. In the parish where I live the school is maintained by a voluntary school rate, not an infrequent arrangement in the country, and I think the accounts should be open to the scrutiny of every ratepayer. I beg to thank the right hon. Gentleman for the full opportunity for the discussion of education we have had this year. He has acted liberally, and I think wisely, in according us so much time, because, as the right hon. Gentleman remarked the other night, we are likely in the future to be plunged into troubled waters and to have to engage in more heated controversies. The right hon. Gentleman may not be in a position to carry out his intentions next year, and some of us hope that may be so. It is obviously to the advantage of both sides of the House that the real issues raised by the proposals in the Code should be thoroughly discussed on the present occasion. The

Debate will clear the ground, and we shall understand, and the country will understand, more definitely the tendency of the Government proposals, and how they are related to proposals foreshadowed for the coming Session. The noble Lord the Member for Darwen (Lord Cranborne) put some rather close questions to the right hon. Gentleman; and from the assent he gave to the views of the noble Lord with regard to the interpretation of Article 92, I venture to draw certain conclusions. Expression has been given to the opinion by various authorities that this large increase of income to smaller schools is not coupled with a sufficient guarantee that the increase shall go to securing the efficiency of the schools. I gather from the assent expressed by the right hon. Gentleman to the views of the noble Lord that we are to understand from the words in Section 92, that the Department will have power to deal with a portion of the grant, to exercise discretion in withholding part from inefficient schools, that this is really nugatory, that there will be a delay and appeals to the Chief Inspector and to the Department, and that in the words there is no security that the school efficiency shall be immediately increased by the grant. This is of first-class importance, and goes to the very centre of the question upon which we are engaged, and it is a point I wish to emphasise, having in view the possible proposals next year. The essential part of the Code seems to me to be the increase in the fixed grants to small schools. Is that grant really to secure efficiency or not? It is obvious that the increase of income will be enormous in the case of the very worst schools in the country; and we do not think there is any guarantee that we shall have additional results as compared to what we now have. The result will be that some of the worst schools, schools which have not obtained the "merit" grant, will receive an enormous addition to their income, amounting in some cases to 30 per cent., and though there may be an adverse Report from the Inspector, the process of appeal may be gone through, and it will practically be a long time before a remedy can be applied. I do not in the least object to an increase of grants to small and poor schools; on the contrary, I cordially welcome such an

Mr. Channing

increase to schools in the poor and destitute villages with which many of us are familiar, if only we have a guarantee that the increase shall be devoted to making the educational work more effective. But I repeat, the effect of the proposal as it stands will be to hand over a very large sum to a large number of schools—voluntary schools—without sufficient guarantee that the money will be devoted to the promotion of efficiency, and will not go merely to the relief of there subscribers. The number of schools that will be affected by this additional grant is exceedingly large. There are no less than 4,214 Church of England schools which will receive a very considerable addition to their income without a guarantee of efficiency, the grant all round being raised to 13s. 6d., while they now receive grants varying from 8s. 7d. to 10s. 7d. There are one or two other points to which I should like to draw attention. I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will not think that I wish to detract from the general expression of approval which has been bestowed upon the educational advance he has endeavoured to carry out in the Code and in which he has on many points been successful; but I think it is the duty of all who are interested in education to indicate defects and point out matters in which the Code is open to criticism. I turn to the question of accommodation, and I really think that many practical educationists must regret that the proposals in the Code are so far behind the recommendations of the Commissioners and so far behind the proposals in the Code of last year. We who sat in the House and followed the history of last year's Code saw with great regret the results following the persistent attacks upon the Education Department from hon. Gentlemen opposite, and those interested in the maintenance of the existing system of voluntary schools and the present limit, for we know the insufficiency of accommodation, the in some cases insanitary buildings and badly lighted school-rooms, in which the voluntary system is carried on. There was a case referred to last year in regard to the town of Luton, in Bedfordshire. The Department, in accordance with their proposal in last year's Code, laid down the principle that in calculating the deficiency of accommodation which had to be met, the places in voluntary schools should be estimated on the 10 feet limit, although the decision of the Government with regard to last year's Code was that they did not adhere to their first proposal to insist on the application of the 10 feet limit to existing voluntary schools. Now we are in this position: that Her Majesty's Government do not propose to deal with the 8 feet limit in existing voluntary schools; but are we to understand that, in the calculation of deficiencies to be supplied by School Boards, where such are in existence, the Department will calculate existing accommodation on the 10 feet, as they did at Luton? I hope the Government will arrive at some arrangement by which the 10 feet limit shall be adopted generally, for it is a matter of great importance to the health of the children. Turning for a moment to the question of pupil teachers. I wish the Government had, in framing this Code, laid down some better guarantee that pupil teachers should have more time and opportunity for self-training and self-advancement. I may be wrong, and I speak with diffidence on the point; but it seems to me the Code is not sufficiently explicit, and does not sufficiently secure the position of pupil teachers in this respect. The extension of the curriculum in day and evening schools is admirable, and the granting of alternative courses is one of the best proposals made for a long time. I welcome the remarks the right hon. Gentleman made the other evening, which, if I rightly understand them, indicate that this is only the beginning of a wise and generous policy on this subject, and that we shall have a gradual widening and deepening of the channels of education. In touching upon the subject of agricultural instruction, I may say the importance of this has not been overrated during the discussion by the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division and others. I live in an agricultural district, and I am sure that if in evening classes we had instruction in subjects relating to agriculture given in an attractive form there would be a great improvement in the moral tone of the young men of our villages, as well as great advantage to the industry in which they are engaged. I turn for a moment to the subject of drawing, and here I recognise one of the most important advances made by the Code. But though I listened carefully to the explanations of the Vice President the other night in regard to this subject, and found a warm recognition of the educational value of the subject, I could not find any indication of any working machinery for carrying it out. There are schools admirably conducted in other respects where the teachers are incapable of teaching drawing, and so the managers will not entertain the subject. The right hon. Gentleman has not pointed out any practical method of overcoming the difficulty. The real remedy is the remodelling of our school management system. I do not know of any School Board where the Chairman is unable to write his name; but I do know instances where Boards, small and composed of men whose intentions are far ahead of their power of dealing with important subjects like this, wish to carry out higher education, but cannot. These difficulties would be met by combined action carried out by a higher authority than a village authority. It is useless to leave the management of educational matters to a country clergyman, assisted by one or two farmers of the district, and expect that they will be able to carry out a system of higher education such as is foreshadowed in this Code. What is wanted is a higher authority, an educational council or authority over a large area, composed of men of knowledge and ability which they would bring to bear upon the subject, and who would be able to work out a system of peripatetic teaching in various subjects to the great advantage of education within their area. This brings me to the real issue of this discussion, a controversial subject into which I have no wish now to enter deeply. I have to impress upon the House this fact, that we are having this boon given to the worst class of voluntary schools, without any guarantee that these schools will be brought up to a thoroughly efficient point. You are giving the advantage to the voluntary schools, which you propose to follow up with further advantages in the coming year. I will not go into the point further, nor do I refer to it in any bitter spirit. What I insist upon, in conclusion, is that you cannot obtain the highest results except by combination. The only proper system is that of a representative authority elected by the people themselves, with a wide area, where the whole of these educational questions can be dealt with by a large representative body, in the interests of the people and not in the interests of a creed. (8.31.)

(9.2.) Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

(9.4.) MR. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth): I only wish to occupy the time of the Committee for a few moments whilst I draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to two points which, though small, are, I think, worthy of the attention of the Committee. At the end of the Code there is a reference made to the lowest dimensions for the building of teachers' houses, and I find that the minimum height of the rooms is fixed at 8ft. I have the honour to be a member of a Sanitary Authority, and we have Local Bodies coming to us from time to time for powers to compel all houses to be built of certain dimensions. So far as I am aware, 8ft. has never been allowed as a minimum in any case. They have asked for 9ft. and 8ft. 6in., and it seems to me to be a matter to be regretted that even when the lowest class of houses for the poorest section of the population have to have rooms of not less than 8ft. 6in. in height, we should allow our school teachers to inhabit houses with rooms as low as 8ft. I trust that now that the right hon. Gentleman's attention has been called to the matter, although he has fixed this as a minimum, he will not, save in very exceptional cases, allow the minimum to be reached. Then, I would call attention to the requirements of the Code in regard to the teaching of French. There are not a great many children in the elementary schools of this country who are taught French, and I am afraid that, while the regulations remain as they are, there are not likely to be many. In the Higher Board School of Sheffield French has been taught from the beginning, and great difficulty has been experienced in connection with it. For some years in that school the teacher was a highly trained and fully certificated Swiss teacher. He taught with considerable success so long as he was allowed to pursue a somewhat more popular method than that prescribed by the Code. My point is that it is not possible under ordinary circumstances for children, even in the higher Board schools, to give a great deal of attention to French, and that, therefore, it is desirable that they should be permitted to acquire a sort of colloquial knowledge of the language that may be of use to them in commercial pursuits rather than that they should be required to ground themselves in grammar, the study of which they will never be able to continue for any length of time. I have received a letter from the teacher to whom I have referred, from which I make the following extracts. He says—

> "I have been able to see fully, these last years, the disadvantages of the scheme of last Code, having been obliged through a decision of the School Board to follow exactly this scheme in my teaching. This decision was taken in order to increase the grant. . . . . . The New Code brings no improvements, and if adopted will perpetuate the mistaken features of English teaching of French, in spite of all desire shown by the public Press and by the Chambers of Commerce to introduce an efficient teaching.
>
> The disadvantages I found in teaching according to the line drawn by the Code are the following:—
>
> 1. The teacher being obliged to teach so much theory and grammar, must necessarily neglect conversation and written practice, which only can interest the pupils.
>
> 2. The pupils soon get tired of this dry study, and leave it off as soon as they can.
>
> 3. The powers ef conversing, which is necessary in order to obtain a commercial certificate, will never be acquired thus.
>
> 4. This language teaching is inefficient, and will be of very little use, if any, to the pupils in their career. The standard of the French in the Central School is now worse than it was a few years ago, though the financial results may have increased. . . . . . .
>
> The objections I have to the New Code scheme are the following:—
>
> 1. The first year is completely taken up by a theoretical teaching, and it will be more so now that a reading book is to be introduced.
>
> 2. The second, and especially the third, year have really less to do than the first.
>
> 3 The conversation is put off to the third year, consequently will never be useful, if there is ever a conversation.
>
> Would it not be possible to have an alternative course for this subject as it is the case for English and the other class subjects for instance, and as the Code treats modern languages like dead languages, could not there be a course for these who learn it in view of commerce or industry? The following alternate scheme would answer this purpose and make a first step towards commercial schools, which, by-and-bye, will surely be opened in England as they are abroad:—First year or stage: Grammar to the two first conjugations used in conversation in little easy questions and answers spoken and dictated. Notice shall be

> taken of the pronunciation. Second year: Grammar—the four conjugations used in conversation; the most important irregular verbs. Dictation in French; importance given to pronunciation. Third year: Grammar—irregular verbs. Dictation in French. Easy composition or oral relation in French of an easy subject; good pronunciation essential. . . . . I think that if there were a second course typical of newer methods of teaching, the Council of Education would promote a sound, useful knowledge which would surely bring good fruit for the country."

We find that the counting houses of this country are filled with German clerks, who come here and obtain employment because they have a better knowledge of foreign languages than our own people. I think that state of things should not be allowed to continue to exist. It cannot be called a foolish luxury to have our children taught French, or German, or both, and they should be taught in the way this gentleman suggests, so as to be able to make commercial use of those languages in this country, or, if necessary, abroad. The hon. Baronet the Member for the Banbury Division spoke of members of School Boards being unable to read or write. Well, I do not know of cases of that kind; but I do know a case where, in a certain village, the Chairman of a School Board, who was a man who could do very little more than sign his name, was a most determined supporter of technical education, and whenever this education was referred to as a luxury or as unnecessary, he used to say to the men working with him, "I don't care what you say, but we are going to have these lads educated better than we were." And I hope we shall have our children educated in these higher subjects in spite of the fears of noble Lords and others.

(9.15.) MR. CONYBEARE: I was glad the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down emphasised the necessity of having instruction in foreign languages. What he has said as to our own people being ousted from profitable employment by immigration, from Germany in particular, is perfectly true. I have always been most anxious to see a great deal more and better instruction given to our children in French and German, and, looking at the amount of business transacted with South America, in Spanish also. I mention this because we can hardly expect this improved teaching to take place in our elementary schools, when we find it so lamentably deficient in our higher grade schools. Even in our great public schools, except among a few boys who take what is called "the modern side," the boys who are drilled in French or German are no better able to make use of those languages for practical commercial purposes than if they had never seen a book relating to French or German in their lives. How, then, are you going to instruct your poor children in your elementary schools in these subjects? I am afraid if we asked the Vice President for increased grants to enable us to employ foreign teachers we should have him pulling a very long face indeed. And here I would say that almost the only thing for which I was inclined to find fault with the right hon. Baronet for his speech the other evening was his too frequent expression of regret at the amount we are spending on education every year. We ought to spend more on education than we do on the Army and Navy. The Americans do that, and until we follow their example—though I do not say we should not spend enough money on armaments to place ourselves in a sound state of defence—we shall never keep abreast of the requirements of the times. I am glad to add my quota of approval and satisfaction at the Code which has been introduced by the right hon. Baronet, and I beg to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on his statement this year being far more satisfactory than that which he made last Session. It is a satisfaction to me to be able to congratulate a Tory Minister upon any point. It is not often that I find an opportunity, but there is an opportunity now, and I gladly avail myself of it. The right hon. Gentleman touched lightly on the question of payment by results, and while I admit the steps which have been taken with a view to getting rid of that baneful system, I would point out that a great deal must depend on the working of the Act through the instructions given to the Inspectors. There are many loop-holes in the instructions through which the system of payment of results may creep in, and the right hon. Gentleman may find that it has been more abolished in name than in actuality. Under

Article 98, Sub-section B, it seems to me that the objectionable system of payment by results may still continue. I recognise that probably the heaviest blow which the right hon. Gentleman has struck against the system of paying by results is the establishment of a fixed grant, which will relieve teachers, and I think Inspectors too, to a very great extent of that financial pressure which has been at the root of many of the evils of the present system. You cannot, of course, get rid entirely of individual examination, but I hope that many of the evils of the system will be eliminated. With respect to the question of examination, I should like to draw the right hon. Gentleman's attention to Section 99 of the Act, in conjunction with the instruction in Section 13. In Section 99 it is laid down that all scholars whose names are on the register must, as a rule, be present at the inspection, and all are liable to be examined. Section 13 provides that the Inspector may choose at random, as specimens of the rest, one-third or one-half of the scholars. There is this difficulty to be faced, that there may be present in the class a not inconsiderable number of children who have recently entered it, and the Inspector may pitch on the very children who, by reason of their being new-comers, will be the least likely to do credit to the school. I may say also it is almost impossible, unless you diminish the number of schools which each Inspector has to look after, or increase the number of Inspectors, to provide for the surprise visits which are intended. I hear complaints from various parts of the country as to the enormous amount of work falling on individual Inspectors. Of course, the answer is that there are not sufficient funds for a very large increase of Inspectors. This is one of the points on which I think we ought to sanction an increase of expenditure. To my mind it is "a penny wise and pound foolish" policy to neglect to provide sufficient Inspectors to relieve the high pressure at which they have to work at the present time. I think also there ought to be greater control over the Inspectors. I hear that one of the Inspectors in my own division has refused to allow boys to discontinue needlework in favour of some other subject. I admit that a boy should know something about needlework as well as about other subjects, but I think, if parents desire a boy to discontinue instruction in needlework, there is perhaps not sufficient reason why he should not be allowed to discontinue it. The new Regulations affecting teachers appear to me to be most admirably framed for the purpose in view, and the only complaint I should make with regard to the teaching power is that, as a rule, too great a number of children are set down as the maximum size of a class. Article 73 of the Code relates to the number of scholars teachers shall have charge of. On this point I can speak with some personal experience, because for some years I had the honour of being a teacher in the High School at Manchester, a school where you do not get the lowest class of boys, certainly. From experience I can say that it is impossible for any teacher to deal satisfactorily with more than 50 boys at the outside in one class. I should prefer to say that 35 are quite sufficient for a teacher. If this is true in regard to high-class schools, or to public schools, or endowed schools, how much more true must it be when we are dealing with the little wretched urchins out of the street, who have no idea of discipline, and with whom you have to commence at the beginning. I have received a letter from a lady teacher, who says that her own experience tells her that 40 children, especially when they are under six years of age, are quite as many as one teacher can do justice to or keep a cheerful discipline amongst. She also tells me that, in order to have an average attendance of 70, a teacher must have about 100 children on the class rolls, all of whom she may have to attend to on many days. Then there is a point with respect to classification. I ask the right hon. Gentleman's careful attention to the rule which he lays down in Article 99 C as to the examination of scholars over seven years of age in Standard I. I know there are certain provisions and limitations introduced in the Instructions on this point; but I am afraid that in practice the teachers will find that these provisions mean that almost all children will have to go up into Standard I. when they are seven years of age. If the Inspectors are not exceedingly careful not to insist upon the examination of children of seven years of age in Standard I., I am afraid the teachers generally will be anxious to send up delicate children before the right time to Standard I., which will overtax their mental and physical strength. As a member of the School Board I had to deal with a certain school. The most efficient teacher of that school lost her situation in consequence of a difference on this very point between the Inspector and herself. It is very unfair there should be any opportunity for such a difference arising, and for the loss by the teacher of her situation, and by the school of her services. In the case to which I refer the teacher was found to be right; but it did not save her from having to give up her profession. I have found in the case of boys, especially of small boys, that if they are not well fed and clad they are likely to be more delicate in physical strength than even girls, and that to send them to Standard I. simply because they happen to be a few days or weeks over age is cruel, owing to the great roughness with which they are liable to be treated by the elder boys in the standard. I desire now to offer a word upon what has elicited a great deal of interesting comment in this Debate, namely, the training of the powers of observation. Not only in the elementary schools, but in the highest schools of the country, the training of the powers of observation of the children is the last thing that is thought of. However clever our boys may be at book-learning and athletics, they pass through life without in the least using their eyes to observe the phenomena of Nature. This arises from the fact that we begin by cramming childrens' minds with all kinds of abstract rules, instead of developing their mental faculties by giving them what, at an early age, they can properly assimilate. It is of importance, in my opinion, that our children should know something of the simple science connected with the phenomena of Nature. You will infer that I am a determined opponent of what is known as grammar. I think that to ram into the minds of the unfortunate little urchins abstract and pedantic forms, which are known under the name of grammar, is simply a waste of time. It gives children a distaste for other useful forms of learning, and, therefore, does irreparable mischief. I have not the same condemnation to bestow on recitation. That, I think, is highly useful, developing, as it does, the childrens' powers of memory. There is another point in connection with curriculum I want to draw attention to, and that is drill. In the curriculum, drill is mentioned casually, and that only in connection with the infants. I feel very strongly that children, to whatever class of life they belong, ought to be made accustomed to drill of a useful and military character. I am not one of those who think that by accustoming the children to drill we shall be inspiring the minds of the boys with military ideas which will have a prejudicial effect upon our country hereafter. Every young man in the country ought to be drilled and accustomed to weapons of self-defence—ought to know how to use the rifle. I believe that so far from encouraging military passions that will be the best preventive against anything like the adoption of a universal system of conscription in this country. For the purpose of training boys in habits of discipline and orderliness, and also for developing their mental faculties, drill is desirable. Drill is carried on to a great extent in many of the Board schools in London, but it is by no means universal. Drill should be a necessary portion of the curriculum, and I imagine there would be no difficulty in finding many old soldiers who would make very efficient drill masters. Now, on page 28 of the Schedule relating to elementary science mention is made of domestic economy. That apparently is limited to girls, but I want to know why boys should not have the benefit of the course. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will turn his attention to the point. In this House I represent a mining constituency. We have heard much about the necessity of having agricultural education in rural districts, and of book-keeping and all that sort of thing. I should like to press on the right hon. Gentleman the desirability in mining constituencies such as mine of having particular attention paid to the question of mining education. I will not dwell on the point, as I think it is sufficient to drop the hint. One word in reference to the admission of children to school. The right hon. Gentleman may reply that this is a question of administration, which will be dealt with privately; but I must draw his attention to Article 78, which says that no child may be refused admission as a scholar on other than reasonable grounds. We have heard of a case in which the Rev. H. D. Pearson, who was recently a member of the School Board for London, refused a boy admission to a school simply on the ground of his non-attendance at the parson's Sunday-school. I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether that, in his opinion, is a reasonable ground. I am most anxious not to delay the Committee, and, therefore, I will only refer incidentally to two other points—school libraries and savings banks. I have no doubt these points have been under the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman. I am sure we must all be agreed that the more school libraries and school savings banks we have the better it will be for the children and all who derive benefit directly or indirectly from the school.

*(9 50.) MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): There are some matters, such as needle-work, which are referred to in the Code which I am sure all hon. Members will admit would be best dealt with by ladies. There are several things to which the schoolmistresses object, and it is only right that someone should draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to some of the mistress's objections. I profess entire ignorance of needlework. I do not know whether the Vice President of the Council professes to be guided by personal knowledge, or whether he has a Committee of matrons to advise him on the subject; but I think it would well that I should, in the briefest possible way, state what alterations are desired. It is suggested that, in regard to Standard I., felling, the obsolete and fancy stitching, marking, whipping, and diagonal cut, should be struck out. The teachers also suggest that the provision that the number of garments required in Standards I., II., and III., be half as many as there are children on the books be made applicable to all the standards. Then they suggest that the alternative scheme adopted for small schools be extended to larger schools, where the upper standards are small; that inspecction be substituted for examination in infant schools; that in Standard III. fixing the hem for two sides be substituted for four sides, and that one hour instead of 45 minutes be allowed for examination. These are matters in which the teachers take a deep interest, and I think their suggestions are worthy of, and should have, favourable consideration. I shall be pleased to hand to the right hon. Gentleman the objections in writing, as I have no doubt it has been difficult for him to follow me. Now, I want to say a word on the question of appeal. It is the teachers' desire, and I think it is only fair that if the Inspector considers and intends to report that the school is being conducted inefficiently, he should there and then state the objection and give the teacher an opportunity of appealing against the Report at the moment, and so obtain an immediate re-examination of the children. I trust that this act of justice to the teachers will be conceded by the Vice President.

*SIR L. PLAYFAIR: My right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council must be satisfied with the practical character of the speeches which have been made in the two nights' Debate. The speeches have traversed the whole subjects of the Code, and have gone much into detail. The Code is of such a character that in the few remarks I propose to make I shall put details to one side. The Code ought to be viewed in its general aspects. It is a real revolution in the state of the education of the country at the present time. That revolution has been pending for some years. The friends of education have been distressed at the low results obtained by the present methods of education, and the time has come when the Department, backed up by the efforts of a Royal Commission, have had the bravery to revolutionise the system and to bring it into sympathy with the educated opinion of the country. The extensive character of the change is disguised by the details. You may have no conception of the magnitude of a forest if you bestow too much attention on individual trees around you; and I think the magnitude of this Code and the important changes which it is likely to produce on the education of this country are not seen if we address ourselves too much to specific parts of the Code itself. The Code has met with general approval and has commended itself to the good sense of the country. This House of Commons has been extremely generous in the matter of money; but as the results have been so small, it is time we found out what has produced the waste. I believe it would not be too much to say that a vast quantity of the treasure we have expended on education might with as much advantage to the country have been put in one of those great ocean ships which go to the Atlantic and have been thrown into the sea. Now, an hon. Member has said that this is an Inspectors' Code. I agree with him that the two great agencies involved in this New Code are the Inspectors and the teachers; and I would say it is a Code which may be called an Inspectors' Code and a Teachers' Code. First of all, let us see what is the result to the Inspectors. The Inspectors of this country are men of high mental qualifications, generally of the highest University education. They have been selected for their knowledge, for their ability, and for their learning. What is it this Code does? It converts these Inspectors in future from mere assessors of percentages in examination into advisers of the managers and true helpers of the teachers. The Code undoubtedly throws an enormous amount of new responsibility on the Inspectors. I know how admirably those gentlemen have worked, and how zealous they are in the performance of their duties. I believe that they will accept these new responsibilities with pleasure; they will throw even more zeal into their work, and will make the education of the country more worthy of the liberality which the country shows in voting money to it. An hon. Member has said that the teachers have a good deal to complain of in this Code. I do not say there are no matters in respect of which they might not have been better considered. But what, let me ask, does the Code do for the teachers? Of course, it does not do everything they could expect, but they are no longer to be treated as grinders at the mill. In future they are to be the trainers of efficient and intelligent citizens and are to use their own teaching methods in order to obtain these results. Canon Moseley, who was an Inspector, once used the expression "As is the teacher so is the school." The qualities of the teacher are reflected by the scholars as in so many pieces of a broken mirror. Under the system now in force it is impossible for the teacher to produce effective results. All this is now to be altered. The system is to be free from cram. Examinations are always an evil in education, but, unfortunately, we have no other means of testing the efficiency of a school. We cannot get rid altogether of examinations, but this system reduces examination to a minimum by testing efficiency by sample. The teachers in future will be in a position of greater dignity, and will have more power in showing their efficiency. I admit there is a want of elasticity still, but I think the teachers should be satisfied with the great step in advance. Experience of the working of the New Code will prove whether further elasticity ought to be given. As to the training of teachers, I think there need be no timidity in the direction of limiting the number of teachers trained in extra-mural schools to 200 a year. Of course, you do not want to train teachers in excess of the demand, but I hope my right hon. Friend will withdraw that limit. This system of outdoor training schools is not an experiment; it has worked successfully in Scotland, and if you have so small a number as 200 it will be found impossible to secure a proper staff of professors in the collegiate institutions which you desire to undertake this duty. I once examined a school for teachers in America which contained 1,200 pupils, and the result was admirable. Now, what does the Code do for the scholars? The Code from which we are just emancipated had the crudest conception of the continuity of education, and I consider that the great merit of the new Code is the idea of continuity of education throughout. The five Standards chiefly passed by the scholars in a school have no continuity of education about them in the sense of true education; they are merely the tools of education. The pupils are never taught how to use those tools for the purposes of future life. All that is given is a thin veneer of education, which soon wears off after the child leaves school. This Code brings them all into line to produce efficiency in elementary education, it links one school with another, and it gives an educational curriculum which really carries out the views of the Royal Commission except in one respect. Having given them that efficiency, I hope the Code will make science a class subject, and in course of time put it on a level with drawing, which the Code makes compulsory. Drawing is a part of technical education. It is the language of work, and if you teach your scholars how to draw you enable them to interpret their own ideas and to do their work more efficiently. There are five gates to knowledge, and only through these gateways can knowledge enter the mind. Two of those gateways you have closed in former Codes—the eye and the hand—and you can best open them by teaching drawing. As to evening schools, I warned the late Mr. Forster, in 1870, that they would dwindle away, and they now do not contain 1 per cent. of the scholars. And the reason for that is obvious—namely, because the evening schools merely give elementary education instead of becoming continuation schools, giving higher instruction to their scholars. I trust that in future these evening schools will become continuation schools, and will thus link together the elementary schools and those schools in which higher education is given. We do not obtain the results which we ought to secure in our schools, and we do not send out our children fully equipped in armour for the battle of life. The armour with which we supply them cracks with the first blow. Would hon. Members, in regard to their own children, think them fitted, even with these superior advantages, to go into life at 11 years of age? What is being done at the present time, is to turn the children of the working classes out at 10 or 11 years of age with a thin varnish of education, which is speedily rubbed off. They are expected to be equal to the working classes of other countries which possess secondary and continuation schools, where a complete technical education is given. The Vice President in his admirable speech said that this Code would cover the whole area of technical education. I do not agree with him. You will never give real technical education in the elementary schools; we do not desire it; what is required is to impart to them a desire to enter continuation schools and technical schools. The present competition of industry in the world is a competition of intellect, and unless you make our population intellectual, and enable it to apply its intelligence to the work and industry of the country, it is perfectly impossible to continue the competition. I desire to say a few words as to the aid you give to small schools throughout the country. I agree that that aid ought to be liberal, and I think it will prove to be largely in excess of what you expect. You cannot ultimately expect it to be less than £200,000 a year, and for such a payment I think we have a right to expect greatly increased efficiency. It is possible to maintain inefficiency instead of increasing efficiency, and it must be expected that we shall jealously watch this increased expenditure. Many of us favour Board Schools rather than voluntary schools. I have always given as hearty support to voluntary schools; but if by means of this increased grant you maintain inefficiency instead of increasing the efficiency, if it is found that the managers cannot give greater efficiency, then we must put local managers over them. While I do not regard the voluntary schools with disfavour, I wish to point out that they are upon their trial, and that in consideration of greater assistance they will have to become more efficient than they have hitherto shown themselves to be. Such schools may easily render themselves more efficient by combining together to obtain the services of efficient teachers of specialities, such as drawing or cookery. In conclusion, as an old Vice President of the Council, I should like to congratulate the members of the Department upon the work they have done in preparing this new Code, and the Secretaries and the Inspectors and other officials upon the zeal they have displayed in the matter. A great change is to be effected in the education of the country; but I hold that still greater improvements will result if some of the suggestions we have made are adopted.

*(10.25.) THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): After the inordinately long speech in which I explained the changes in our educational system that will result from the provisions of the new Code, it would not be fair of me to occupy much time in commenting upon

the various speeches that have been delivered in the course of this discussion. I thank hon. Members not only for their fair and candid criticism, but also for the more than generous treatment they have accorded to me. I am glad that the right hon. Gentleman opposite has bestowed a well-merited meed of praise upon the officials of the Department for the part they have taken in the preparation of the new Code. It has been said that this is an Inspectors' and Teachers' Code. But it is much more the Code of the Education Department, and it will only be by a vigilant exercise of care by the Department that it can be worked properly for the benefit of the education of the country. Hon. Members opposite appear to think that the proposals that have been made with regard to the day training colleges are rather meagre; and while not differing from their views very widely, all I can say upon that point is that I will consult my Colleagues with reference to the suggestions that have been made, which, if adopted, may probably improve the somewhat experimental lines on which the Code has been prepared. I think that the new Code, taken with the Acts of last year, cover the whole ground as far as technical education is concerned. Hon. Members opposite take a more gloomy view as regards the expenditure of the Department than I am prepared to do; and as far as our existing proposals go I hope that the expenditure will only amount to half the sum that has been suggested. I hope, however, that before many years pass we shall reach that maximum sum, for no money can be spent in a better way. With regard to the money to be spent on small schools, I think that the Department will be able to see that it is properly administered. The Department is now served by a number of Inspectors, none of whom have been less than 10 years at their work, and I think that it would be paying those gentlemen a poor compliment to say that they will not be able to put a true test as to where this money has gone. The Department is in constant communication with these Inspectors by means of conferences, and the Inspectors must determine whether this money is so spent as to secure greater educational efficiency.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to estimate that the expenditure will be £100,000 in addition to the Estimates of this year.

*SIR W. HART DYKE: Yes; it will amount to £100,000 in addition to the basis upon which the present Estimates are framed; but as there will only be six or seven months to which the new Code will apply of this financial year the Supplementary Estimate will not be so much. The hon. Member for Poplar has asked what the estimated expenditure per head will be under the Code Bill. The estimated number of day schools is 4,500, with 250,000 scholars, or an average attendance of 55·5, the expenditure is estimated at 3s. 7½d. per head. The hon. Member for Evesham has alluded to one change. With respect to classification, the Department are determined that it shall be thorough and real; and, as I said before, they are prepared to issue a Circular to their Inspectors dealing with this question. I will read a few sentences of a Memorandum, giving the substance of that Circular—

"It is the intention of the Department that teachers should experience no difficulty whatever in honestly classifying their scholars according to capacity and attainment.

"We lay down that under ordinary circumstances a scholar should be advanced a standard in elementary and class subjects, or a stage in specific subjects, each year, and that an infant over seven years of age should, as a rule, be presented in the First Standard. But this rule is intended to apply only to the average child of average capacity, and having had ordinary opportunities. The freedom given will more than fill the place of the former exception schedules, with this difference—that a child may be advanced in any subject he is fit to be advanced in, and kept back in any subject in which he is backward. In every school it may be expected that there will be some children unfit to be advanced.

"We shall instruct the Inspector that it will not be his duty to inquire closely into the reasons for the classification of particular children if he is satisfied that the school, as a whole, is making fair progress. But if he has reason to suppose that there has been an abuse of the freedom given—for instance, if low classification has been rendered necessary by neglect of the scholars, or if the classification is such as to disorganise the school—it will then, of course, be his duty to inquire, and the result of his inquiries must necessarily affect his judgment of the efficiency of the school.

"The Inspector will be instructed to take into account the presence of sickness in the district, irregularity of attendance from causes beyond the manager's control, and any cause local or otherwise, which may affect prejudicially the progress of the scholars."

That is, generally speaking, the system under which they will work; they will not inquire too closely into cases where the teachers think it right to keep children back. With regard to the question of the fixed grant, I hold, in common with the majority of the Committee, that we should not be treating the taxpayers of this country fairly if we did away altogether with the examination test. The hon. Member for Evesham seems to think that we should pay one large fixed grant, and that Inspectors should look in casually. The Department have deeply considered the question, and it is their strong opinion not only that Parliament would not give its assent to the doing away with the examination test altogether, but also that it would be most injurious to the education of this country; and I believe that the immediate result would be to reduce all schools down to one minimum level, and do away with a great deal of that just ambition which we wish to excite among all teachers and managers.

*Sir R. TEMPLE: I never meant to say that there should be no examination; on the contrary, I guarded against that supposition in my speech of Tuesday last. I admit that examination should be made casually, or occasionally, according to circumstances. What I deprecate is the individual examination of every scholar.

*Sir W. HART DYKE: I am glad to find that the hon. Member is almost at one with us upon the question. With regard to the question of drawing, I find myself between the Scylla of those who advocate the grievance of the teachers on the ground that they would be injured in their profession if this question were pressed too abruptly, and the Charybdis of those who, like myself, are most anxious to see this subject adopted in all our schools. We shall endeavour to steer a safe and just course. It is utterly impossible to say that in one year drawing should be taught in all schools; but we shall proceed on broad and common-sense principles, and do our utmost to promote drawing. Though we must not at first deal harshly with teachers in this respect, yet we hope that before many years have passed we shall find drawing thoroughly adopted throughout the whole educational system of the country, to the enormous benefit of our education. The hon. Member for Flintshire has made allusion to night schools, and has referred to the question of compulsion. For my own part, I am not prepared to advocate a system of compulsion, as I think that we should be running a great risk in doing so, and I prefer to endeavour to attract scholars as much as possible to evening schools. With regard to the question of the Seventh Standard, the Department propose to make an *addendum* in this connection; they intend to recognise the attendance of any scholar who has not reached the age of 14, and permit up to that limit re-examination in Standard VII. Many other suggestions have been made by hon. Members, and many modifications of the Code have been urged upon the Department; but I would remind hon. Members that the Code is not like the law of the Medes and Persians, and has to be re-introduced next Session. I will bear in mind the suggestions which have been made, and if the experience of a few months confirms opinions which may have been expressed I will promise to consider the questions. The hon. Member for Leicester has urged the adoption of the Kindergarten system, and in this respect he was most forcibly answered by the hon. Member for Gorton. Under this Code we do favour the system which the hon. Member advocates, but I am afraid that we cannot adopt it throughout every Standard. As far as I and the whole of the Education Department are concerned, we take the keenest interest in the Code, and will leave no stone unturned to enable it to operate successfully.

*(10.45.) Sir J. PULESTON (Devonport): Speaking as a Welshman, I do not think I ought to allow the discussion to close without giving expression to the obligation which all feel in Wales to the Vice President of the Council for a Code dealing with that most difficult subject, bi-lingual teaching. By his treatment of it he has gratified people of all parties and all creeds in the Principality. That and the other parts of the Code have given complete satisfaction in Wales; and it is due to the right hon. Gentleman that we should emphasise that satisfaction in this Debate, seeing that this action has followed upon the equally satisfactory treatment by the right hon. Gentleman of the question of intermediate education in Wales. We

have, in Wales, reason to be proud of the present Education Department.

(10.47.) MR. PICTON (Leicester): The right hon. Gentleman has not touched on the question of the permanent distinction between trained and untrained teachers. This question causes a great deal of soreness of feeling among teachers, and it will give great satisfaction if the right hon. Gentleman will indicate that the matter shall be re-considered.

(10.49.) MR. W. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhondda): I wish to add a word to what has been said by the hon. Member for Devonport, who has the honour of being a Welshman, but not a Welsh Member. On behalf of the Welsh people I wish to express my gratitude to the right hon. Gentleman for what he has done in regard to the Welsh language, and for the education of the Welsh people.

*(10.50.) SIR W. HART DYKE: With regard to the question of the hon. Member for Leicester, I have stated again and again that the provisions of the Code are not to be in any sense retrospective. I will promise to watch the question very closely, and will do my utmost to remove any grievance which may arise. A question has been raised as to the publication of Reports, and in regard to that I am prepared to act on the recommendations of the Royal Commission. I shall, of course, be glad to consider any suggestion that may be made with regard to our method of giving information.

*(10.52.) MR. CONYBEARE: I wish to make an explanation. In what I said earlier this evening, I referred to the action of Mr. Pearson in one of his schools. Since I sat down I have been informed that he denied the statements in a letter to the Press, which I had not seen. Under these circumstances, I regret to have mentioned the matter at all.

(10.53.) MR. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): Will the right hon. Gentleman give parents who are aggrieved by the position chosen for a pupil by a teacher the right of appeal to the managers of the school? I have heard of more than one case of complaint of a child being kept in a lower standard seemingly by way of punishment when it is fitted for a superior standard.

*(10.54.) SIR W. HART DYKE: It seems to me that this is a question purely for the managers to deal with.

*(10.55.) SIR R. TEMPLE: Does the right hon. Gentleman intend to maintain the distinction between trained and untrained teachers, the former counting for 70 scholars, and the latter for 60?

*SIR W. HART DYKE: Yes.

Vote agreed to.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

EDUCATION CODE (1890) BILL.—(No. 222.)

SECOND READING

Order for Second Reading read.

*(10.58.) SIR W. HART DYKE: In moving the Second Reading of this Bill, I hope the House will allow the stage to be taken, as the Bill is really an outcome of the discussion which has just closed. It is simply to make operative some of the essential parts of the new Code. It deals with the continuation schools, and it also places the new grant for Board schools in rural districts on the same footing as the old grant. I do not think I need detain the House further on this Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

(11.0.) MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Poplar): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the 4,500 schools will include small schools, in reference to his proposals as to fees and staffing?

*SIR W. HART DYKE: The number quoted is assuming that every school accepted our offer with the conditions attaching to it.

*MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I do not at all desire to prolong the Debate, or to raise any difficulty respecting the Bill. The effect of the proposal of the Government is practically to remove the 17s. 6d. limit as regards country schools. What I desire to do, Sir, is, in the simplest possible manner and in few words, to express my regret that the Government have not seen their way to remove the same difficulties in the case of urban schools. That is a great hard ship, and I hope that in the course of the next Session the Government will see their way to removing the mischiefs of which I complain. I certainly do regret that there should be any legislation this Session which does not deal with that other evil, namely, the liability of schools to the payment of rates. That is an evil felt both by voluntary schools and by the School Board schools. I believe that the Government are fully alive to the unsatisfactory condition of the law upon the subject, and I hope before next Session has passed by this law will have been amended. Having made this protest, Sir, I do not wish any longer to delay the progress of the Bill.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

SUPPLY—REPORT.

Resolution [14th April] reported.

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES, 1890-91.

CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES.

"That a sum, not exceeding £307,909, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1891, for the Expenses of Her Majesty's Embassies and Missions Abroad, and of the Consular Establishments Abroad and other Expenditure chargeable on the Consular Vote."

Resolution read a second time.

*(11.3.) MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): Sir, before this Vote is passed there are two questions of very great delicacy to which I wish to call attention. In negotiations so intricate and requiring so much tact as those which the Government is now conducting, I think it undesirable that we should increase by any imprudent remarks, which might be misconstrued, the difficulty which no doubt is already felt to exist. One question relates to the delimitation of British and German areas of influence in South Africa, and the other to the negotiations pending with France in respect to Newfoundland. I do not propose, for the reason I have given, to enter into those subjects, but I hope the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs will say anything that can be said to allay the anxiety which the House feels upon these matters. We have, I believe, no reason to complain of the spirit in which the questions relating to Newfoundland have so far been treated in France, or of the manner in which they have been dealt with in the French Chamber. I should be glad to hear from the right hon. Gentleman that the attitude which the French Government have taken is one which makes it easy to discuss the matter in an amicable spirit. I hope, also, he will be able to correct any mis-impressions which have been formed from answers given in the last fortnight as to what has happened in Newfoundland itself. There have been alarming telegrams sent to this country as to what has happened in Newfoundland, and if those reports have been exaggerated the right hon. Gentleman will now have an opportunity of telling us something relating to them. I would like to say that this question affords some hope or prospect of applying the method of arbitration. We are all accustomed to honour arbitration in the spirit, but we seldom give it much support when the time for taking practical steps arrives. It must, no doubt, be remembered that however anxious we may be to see the principle practically applied, and however valuable we may regard it as an alternative to armed force, it is often difficult to apply it. There are cases in which the disputes about facts are such, and the difficulty of ascertaining them so great, that the intervention of an arbitrator cannot be judiciously invoked. This is not one of those cases. The dispute with Newfoundland is very largely a purely legal controversy. The facts, which seldom happens in diplomatic disputes, are substantially admitted by both sides. It would be, if this were the case of a dispute between private individuals, mainly a question for the Court; there would be only comparatively small questions for the jury. Now, cases of this nature, cases of disputed interpretation or doubtful law, are cases which can be referred to arbitration. It is matter eminently fitted for the interposition of an arbitrator, if one can be found, who could be relied upon by both Governments as perfectly impartial and competent. To find such a one is surely not impossible. The question is one which ought not to create any permanent difficulty between the two countries, both being willing to approach it in a fair and reasonable spirit. I desire, also, to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he can tell the House anything with

regard to the report of a shocking massacre perpetrated upon some Christian emigrants who were proceeding from North Macedonia into Servia. It would appear that the condition of Macedonia is disturbed, and that all the elements of insurrection exist there, and it is much to be wished that the strongest effort should be made by the Porte to restore order and to prevent the danger of insurrection breaking out. The report to which I refer is a terrible one, for it is stated that 80 people have been killed, and that the local Turkish authorities have been virtually accomplices in the crime. Passing from that, another point I wish to refer to is the condition of Armenia. In that unfortunate country great cruelties have been perpetrated, and its condition has hardly improved at all since the war. Our own Consuls and the American Missionaries, who are most impartial witnesses, agree in saying that the country suffers not only under the exactions of the officials, but also from the depredations of the Kurds and other races. The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs has answered a question this evening on the subject of one atrocity, and I wish to draw the right hon. Gentleman's attention to yet another —the alleged roasting of a peasant in the district of Khanoos by a Turkish official who wanted to extort money from him. Now, the House knows that these are frequent, and, so to speak, ordinary occurrences in Armenia, and when complaint is made the answer generally given is that it is not in the power of the Turkish Government to prevent them, because to do so military force would be necessary. But it appears from an answer lately made in this House by the right hon. Gentleman that considerable improvement has taken place in Bitlis in consequence of the exertions of Réouf Pasha, whom he describes as an honest and vigorous official, who has been recently sent there. I hope what he says may be true. But if improvements can be brought about in one district in this way, why cannot the same thing be done in Erzeroum and other districts? Influence should be brought to bear on the Porte to encourage the appointment of upright and active men to other places besides Bitlis. I must refer for a moment to one case which has attracted much attention recently, and which throws a full light on the difficulties in the way of obtaining justice in Turkey. I refer to the trial of Moussa Bey. It shows that the Turkish Government has no desire to do right, and that it is totally lost to any sense of justice. Moussa Bey is a Kurdish chief, whose father is still famous in that part of the world for having, 30 years ago, burnt a whole village, and killed some 80 people. Moussa Bey of late years has been the terror of the district inhabited by his people. A year or 18 months ago he eclipsed his previous acts by violently abducting a young Christian girl from her parents, and he is said to have also roasted a man to death by flinging him on a pile of faggots. These deeds excited too much comment, and the Porte was compelled to summon him to trial, but the official, who might be called the *Juge d'Instruction*, at once endeavoured to prevent his being tried, by endeavouring to ignore and get rid of the charges. On the representation of the Government, backed by public feeling in Europe, the action of the *Juge d'Instruction* was over-ruled, and it was determined to try Moussa Bey, but, instead of being kept like a prisoner in Constantinople, he was sent to the house of his uncle at Scutari, where he suffered a kind of honourable detention, and was treated as a champion of Mussulman interests. When the trial came on, the Public Prosecutor, instead of trying to state the case properly and give the witnesses a fair chance of telling their story, really acted as counsel for the prisoner, browbeat the witnesses, and emulated the conduct of Scroggs and Jefferies in the State trials of Charles II. and James II.'s reign. In the end, this man, about whose guilt there was no doubt whatever, was acquitted by the majority of the Court on some counts, while they failed to convict on others. He has, so far, entirely escaped conviction. If hon. Members refer to the Blue Book, they will find that Mr. Devey, our Vice Consul at Van, undoubtedly believed in the truth of the charges. Sir William White, our Ambassador at Constantinople, and the Representatives of the Embassy, who watched the proceedings in Court, give a very full and instructive account of the proceedings, and it shows they are convinced that Moussa Bey is guilty. In spite of this Moussa is acquited, and what are we to think of Turkish justice, and the impression made upon the Mohammedan population when we see a man who has disgraced his nationality by these shocking crimes is treated practically as a hero, and is acquitted on his trial. I may also mention, as showing what Turkish justice is worth, that another case has happened since. A revolting outrage was committed on a young German not long ago in the neighbourhood of Constantinople. There was no doubt at all about the facts, but the Turkish Court acquitted the accused, and it was not until the German Ambassador addressed the most serious threats to the Porte that the Sultan gave way, ordered the trial to be cancelled, and a new trial to be held, dismissing at the same time the Minister of Justice, who had endeavoured to shield the culprit. I believe there is some prospect that Moussa Bey may yet be put upon his trial. The lesson which the German Ambassador gave has, perhaps, not been lost, and I should like to know what is the latest information which the Government possesses on the subject. Is it true, as has been reported, that Moussa Bey will be tried once more? If such is the case we must hope that the trial will be with some definite purpose. But I hope that, in the face of so strong an instance of total failure on the part of the Turkish Government, and of the effect which representations may have upon it, Her Majesty's Government will direct our Ambassador to speak even more strongly and more clearly than has as yet been done. Intervention by this country in this subject is not wanton intervention. I know there are some who do not see why we should concern ourselves with crimes and outrages committed in Turkey any more than in any other country. It is a natural impulse in humane people to make representations to any country in which crimes and outrages are committed, but we know well enough that however strong our feelings may be we have no title or claim to interfere in the internal affairs of other European Powers, however grave the cases may be. But the case is not so with regard to Turkey. We are in good faith and honour responsible for crime that happens there, because it is we that sustain the Turkish power. It was we who set aside the Treaty of San Stefano, and who took the duty of protecting the Christian subjects out of the hands of Russia; and henceforth we have not only the right, but the very clear and bounden duty to interfere in matters of this kind. Indeed one may go a little further. One may say that if it had not been for the support which the Turkish Empire received from England, it would have been broken up long ago. The natural course of events is that when Government becomes utterly rotten and effete, and unable to make itself respected, it comes to an end by its own weakness. Some stronger power arises, the dynasty is dethroned, or the Empire itself breaks to pieces. We have stepped in, and upheld and kept what would have been a decaying carcase in some sort of suspended animation. It is owing to the Powers of Europe generally, but particularly to England, that Turkey has been so long maintained in life as a Government. If that be so, what duty can be more incumbent upon us than to endeavour to bring about alterations in the condition of such a country, where oppression and injustice rule, and to address strong remonstrances to its Government? I dare say there are many Members of this House who think that there is really no hope of Turkish reform, and that no better thing could happen to the Empire than that it should vanish out of existence altogether. I express no opinion on that point. We know that it stands there, because we are not prepared to put anything in its place; and, while it is there, we are bound to continue the policy of remonstrance and exhortation, and to endeavour if we see an opportunity of not only seeing that strict justice is done in a case like that of Moussa Bey, but to urge the Turks to take the one method certainly open to them, that of appointing Governors who will substitute good government for crime, misery, and suffering.

(11.29.) SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): Sir, I have given notice of an

Amendment upon this Vote, and, as the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs can only speak once, I rise for the purpose of calling attention to the charge for the unforeseen Mission of Sir J. Lintorn Simmons to His Holiness the Pope.

***The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS** (Sir J. Fergusson, Manchester, N.E.): I beg to point out that there is nothing taken in the Vote for this special Mission.

Sir G. CAMPBELL: I have in my hands a despatch from Sir J. Simmons, dated the 7th April, 1890, which states that he had an interview with His Holiness the Pope.

***Sir J. FERGUSSON**: I beg to call attention to the fact that the expense of the unforeseen Mission was supplied out of the Revenue of Malta.

Sir G. CAMPBELL: The Under Secretary told us the other night that the expenses were for unforeseen services, but, be that as it may, I can raise the subject by moving the reduction of the salary of our Ambassador in Italy. I have not in the least degree to complain of the conduct of Lord Dufferin; far from it. But by the appointment of Sir J. L. Simmons, the labours of our Ambassador must have been considerably lessened, and, therefore, his salary ought to be cut down. I find Sir John Lintorn Simmons has been appointed Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to His Holiness the Pope, while we have an Ambassador in Italy. I object to this Mission as unnecessary and contrary to the policy of this country. I am not afraid of the Pope, from a religious point of view, but I say there is not the smallest necessity for an Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to be sent to him in order to settle some trumpery ecclesiastical affair in Malta. I maintain that if we read between the lines we shall find that the real object of this Mission has had to do not with Malta, but with Ireland; that it was sought to secure the influence of His Holiness in settling the Irish Question. The Pope hankers after diplomatic recognition by the Powers of Europe, and we all know that he can be very much gratified and influenced by conceding to him that recognition. It seems to me that in pursuance of this policy of consulting His Holiness——

*(11.33.) **Mr. SPEAKER**: The hon. Member is out of order in referring to that. There is no Vote on the matter referred to by the hon. Member included in this Resolution.

(11.33.) **Sir G. CAMPBELL**: Are we distinctly to understand that nothing is to be paid for this Envoy? I desire to move to reduce the salary of our Ambassador to Italy, but I presume that if I do I shall be ruled out of order. May I take it that nothing is to be paid under this Vote for this special Mission?

***Sir J. FERGUSSON**: Yes.

Sir G. CAMPBELL: Then I have nothing more to say on the matter. I now pass over from Europe to Asia, and say a word as to the appointment of Mr. Clifford Lloyd to be Her Majesty's Consul General at Erzeroum, a position of great importance, hitherto held by that most highly qualified and able officer, General Chermside, whose despatches we have all read with so much interest. The position is a most difficult one, requiring negotiations of a most delicate character to be conducted between this country and that rotten Empire, Turkey, seeing that in the district of Erzeroum there is a war of races raging between the native population and the Mohammedans. In such a post as that you wanted a man of tact, sagacity, and discretion, who, from his previous history, you could rely upon to appease rather than stir up quarrels. Mr. Clifford Lloyd is certainly not the man to have selected. He has made Egypt, Ireland, and the Mauritius, too hot for him, and he has retired from the service of the country twice on medical certificates declaring him to be unfit for further employment. I could not have believed that Lord Salisbury would have appointed Mr. Clifford Lloyd to this post, and I am altogether at a loss to understand the influence that has been brought to bear upon his Lordship in the matter, and I do not think the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs will be able to say anything in defence of the appointment. I now go to Japan. In the reduction I propose I include part of the salary of the Consular Judge in that country. Several of the Great Powers have agreed to an arrangement that has placed Japan on the footing of a civilised country, but Her Majesty's Government have held out, and have refused to assent to that equitable arrangement. It seems to me a most extraordinary thing that the British Government, of all Governments on the face of the earth, should refuse its consent, for if there is a Government which has suffered from those injuries and unjust capitulations, which are another form of the extra territorial jurisdiction, it is our Government. We have suffered in this respect in Egypt, and I think we should bring our experience to bear upon the matter and avoid these evils in the case of Japan, regarding that country as able to dispense proper justice. Having done with Asia I will now say a word in regard to Australasia. I want to know what is the present position of affairs with regard to the New Hebrides. I have seen statistics which declare that the French outnumber the British there, and if that is the case I think we might very well make it an Imperial question and exchange our interest in the New Hebrides for that of France in Newfoundland. I will not go into the Newfoundland question, as it is a matter of great delicacy, and one in regard to which we can rely on the conciliatory policy of the head of the Foreign Office. In justice to Lord Salisbury, who is often attacked for subserviency to the Germans, I would say, that although he has been conciliatory to Germany, he has been equally so to France. Then, in regard to Africa, I want to know what is going on with the Orange River Territory? Is that important territory going to be given over to a chartered company, and is the monopoly of the Royal Niger Company to be maintained? Have the chartered companies a right to levy duties on the goods of rival traders? We know a Commissioner was sent out some months ago, and I hope Her Majesty's Government will tell us what conclusions have been arrived at, seeing the great interest which is felt in the question. As to Mombassa, the power of the East African Company and the question of slavery in East Africa, I should like to ask for information. I was surprised that the right hon. Gentleman refused to give us information last night. A question was put to him on the subject some time ago, and he returned an answer which was not evasive but diplomatic, and I think he will admit that his words did not convey any meaning whatever. A proclamation had been issued by the company, and as he must have had a copy of it, I think I am entitled to ask the right hon. Gentleman what is the exact position of affairs?

*Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think the question of East Africa arises under this Vote.

Sir G. CAMPBELL: I beg to submit that the resolution covers a Vote for a Consul at Mombassa and a Consul General at Zanzibar, both of whom deal with the East Africa Company and look after it. As a definite proclamation has been issued, I hope we shall be given to understand what its object is and what is the position of the Slave Question in that part of the world. We have always been given to understand that one of the guiding principles of this country in her operations in East Africa is the suppression of slavery, but we know that a system of contract has been adopted by which slaves purchase their freedom by labour. We know that that system has been adopted by the East African Company, and I should like to know if it is now being pursued. We also know that large numbers of slaves have been brought for exportation to the Congo and elsewhere, in order to work under the contract labour system. The matter is one in which we and other countries have taken great interest, and I should like to know what has been done. I should also like to know what is to be done with regard to the jurisdiction of the Consul General at Zanzibar over the African *hinterland* so to speak. There is no reason why great European nations should quarrel, or permit their chartered companies to quarrel, over territories that neither of them possess and neither of them have really reached. It would be better for these countries to consolidate themselves where they are, near the coast, and construct railways. I do not think Lord Salisbury will permit his hands to be forced by Stanley and the Jingoes. I refrain from moving a reduction of the Vote in the hope that we shall have a satisfactory explanation from the Under Secretary.

*(11.50.) SIR W. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.): I am not going to object to everything done by Her Majesty's Government all over the world like the hon. Member who has just sat down—who, while giving them credit for nothing, puts no restraint on his utterances in condemning them. I wish to ask my right hon. Friend whether he has any definite information with regard to Dr. Peters's expedition—whether it is true or not that he has invaded those territories which Englishmen believe come within their sphere of influence, and which we have ventured to hope the Germans, as a friendly nation, wishing to court their own interests as well as ours, and to be on those friendly terms that two great nations should be upon, would not invade. I venture to say that, in the position we occupy as a great nation, the best thing we can do is to state firmly and determinedly what we believe to be our just rights, and not to allow any Power, even Germany, to interfere with them. We have dealt with Portugal, and I would deal with Germany in precisely the same manner. I do not wish to use any threat of any sort or kind, but when an understanding has been come to, and some definite sphere has been settled, I think we might humbly ask Germany to keep within her own sphere. I enter my earnest protest against its being thought that this House of Commons is not a fit place in which to discuss the vital interests of our children, and I believe the sooner this question is settled the better it will be for both countries. I wish also to ask my right hon. Friend whether there is or is not at the present moment a Consul on the Congo, and, if not, why one has not been appointed?

(11.54.) MR. A. PEASE (York): Allegations have been made in letters which have appeared in the columns of the *Times* that there have been a large export of labourers from Zanzibar, many of whom are undoubtedly slaves, and I think that if the right hon. Gentleman will make inquiries on the subject he will find that these allegations are true. Several vessels have lately left Zanzibar for the Congo with labourers, amongst whom are numbers of slaves, who, for a consideration paid to them, have been placed on board these vessels and exported to the Congo State to make the railways there. I understand that not long ago a German vessel left Zanzibar with a mixed cargo and with hundreds of these men on board. An English commander on the station had the vessel searched, and found amongst the slaves two or three who were going unwillingly. He took them off and landed them at Zanzibar, and allowed the vessel to proceed on its voyage. I believe the officer was reprimanded for not having seized the vessel as a slave prize. Whether the accusations against the Congo contracts are true or not I would urge on the Government that they should seize the opportunity whilst the Conference of Brussels is still sitting to bring this question before the Conference and request that it may be thoroughly investigated. On a former occasion when I discussed this question in the House I seemed to have been misunderstood both in the House and by the public outside. I was supposed to have made some remarks reflecting on the British East Africa Company; and I wish to say that I believe that company have pursued the best policy with regard to slavery that an enterprising company could pursue in Africa. I put them in a very different category from the Congo State on the question of labour.

*(11.58.) SIR J. FERGUSSON: I am sure the last thing in my mind is to complain of reference being made to these various matters that have attracted great attention in the country. It would have, indeed, been surprising if no reference had been made to some of them on the present occasion. Indeed, the Government have much reason to appreciate the absence of embarrassing interference on the part of the House of Commons, when it is known that Her Majesty's Government are deeply interested in safeguarding the interests of the country by negotiations with foreign Powers. To the questions that have

been asked with regard to the position of our affairs in various parts of the world I shall endeavour to give sufficient replies. The hon. Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Bryce) began with a brief reference to Newfoundland, and I think he exercised a wise discretion in not entering into the details of matters which are undoubtedly delicate, but which are, I hope, susceptible of peaceful adjustment in the spirit that has actuated the British and French Governments in the past. The hon. Gentleman mentioned arbitration as a suitable expedient in view of contending interests and the interpretation of treaties. The other day the French Minister said that it was possible that certain matters of difference between our Governments might be referred to arbitration. Her Majesty's Government are not averse to that expedient; but it is evident that there must be considerable difficulty in coming to an agreement in regard to the scope of such reference, which must necessarily be limited and defined. The application of the Treaties presents unforeseen difficulties, from the fact that the industry, instead of adjoining a shore which formerly was absolutely without population, is now in the neighbourhood of a considerable population. It is evident that circumstances so changing present difficulties which were not present to the framers of the Treaty. But we have endeavoured to get over the present difficulty by what is called a *modus vivendi.* I regret that that has not been entirely acceptable to the people of Newfoundland; but I think the House will recognise that that was the best expedient to be adopted in the circumstances; at all events, it sacrifices no right pending the settlement of the question. Papers are in preparation, and will shortly be in the hands of Parliament; and when hon. Gentlemen have an opportunity of looking at the terms of the Treaties and the correspondence that has taken place, they will see there have been difficulties in the way of an earlier settlement, with which perhaps some of them were not acquainted with before. Hon. Members will readily recognise that these matters must be treated with delicacy and reserve. There is no desire on the part of the Government to withhold any information from the House; and with reference to certain allegations that have been made, we are informed that no French officer has committed any act inconsistent with existing rights and inconsistent with the terms of the Treaty. To the best of our belief, we have, in late events, no cause of complaint against the French Authorities. The hon. Gentleman made some remarks with respect to the affairs of Turkey, and to the atrocities reported to have been committed by unruly persons in different parts of the Turkish Empire, Sometimes it is our duty to say we possess no information on matters which have been sent by telegraph to the newspapers, because Her Majesty's Consuls do not report occurrences on events which will cause pain and regret in this country without having ascertained their truth. It is easy for a newspaper correspondent to telegraph to this country any rumours of outrages which he may hear; but it is the duty of Her Majesty s Agents abroad, before reporting an event, to make investigations and ascertain the truth of the story. This is why I am often unable to give any information in regard to matters that appear in the newspapers. I regret to say there is too often truth in the statements as to outrages committed by robber bands and tribes in Asia Minor, and also in some of the European provinces. The hon. Member admits that Armenia is now in a better state than it was in some time ago; and he has said that when a Governor of exceptional justice and energy were sent to Armenia it is to be regretted that officers of similar qualifications have not been sent elsewhere.

*Mr. BRYCE: One particular district.

*Sir J. FERGUSSON; Now, Sir, as we take upon ourselves to criticise in such unsparing terms the Government of the Turkish Empire, we ought at least to do justice to the endeavours of the Governors of that country to improve the condition of affairs when it came to their knowledge. The appointment of Réouf Pasha in Armenia is not an isolated instance by any means of the selection of the best possible officer to bring order to the disturbed provinces. The appointment of Chakir Pasha in Crete has, by its results, reflected the greatest credit on the Turkish Government. The successor of Réouf Pasha at Beyrout displays, so it is reported to Her Majesty's Government, the same quality that so long and honourably distinguished him; and I am glad to learn from recent Reports from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum that the Pashas in other districts in which the Armenian population is numerous have also been making similar endeavours to put down and punish outrage. The hon. Gentleman referred to the recent trial of the Kurdish Chief, Moussa Bey. I need not now express any opinion with regard to that trial, for Her Majesty's Ambassador has spoken out very plainly, and has expressed the opinion that that trial was not conducted in a manner consonant with our ideas of public justice. He has condemned it in very strong terms; and I regret deeply, for the sake of the Turkish Empire, for its position in the world, and for its future, that when the opportunity was afforded of bringing to trial a notorious criminal before the eyes of the world, care should not have been taken by the Turkish Authorities to show to the world that there was no desire to shrink from doing justice. But, on the other hand, I think some exception might be taken to the hon. Member's idea of justice. The hon. Member talked about a Public Prosecutor using every effort to procure a conviction.

*MR. BRYCE: I particularly guarded myself from saying anything of the kind.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: That was the impression conveyed to my mind by the hon. Gentleman's speech. Again, I think it would be rather rash to assume that in all the counts on which Moussa Bey was brought to trial there was a denial of justice because a conviction was not obtained. For instance, in one case it appears that not he but his brother was the real criminal. The Government do not know whether Moussa Bey is to be put on his trial on other charges; but they do know that the Minister of Justice under whom this failure took place has been removed. That, at least, is some evidence that the Government of the Sultan do intend to have justice administered with some reality. I think, too, there is evidence before the House that Her Majesty's Ambassador made representations of unusual earnestness in respect to the conduct of justice by this officer. The hon. Member says that this was owing to the German Ambassador. If the hon. Member assumes that Sir W. White has no influence at Constantinople he differs from his right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian.

*MR. BRYCE: I never assumed anything of the kind—on the contrary, I paid a tribute to Sir W. White. The right hon. Gentleman must be careful how he represents what I say.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I will let the House judge between me and the hon. Gentleman. Now before I leave this part of the subject, I should like to point out to the House what the hon. Member thinks is fitting language for one who has held the office of Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to use in this House, language which he thinks, I suppose, will have influence with the Turkish Government, and cause them to restore order in their provinces. The hon. Gentleman talked of the Turkish Empire as a "decaying carcass," and said that many people thought that the best thing that could happen would be that the Turkish Empire should break up and come to an end. That is the hon. Gentleman's idea of statesmanship, and the way in which this country can obtain influence with Foreign Powers? I differ with him. I venture to say that no more unfortunate language could be used by a Member in his position. What passes in this House travels throughout the world.

*MR. BRYCE: The right hon. Gentleman must allow me again to interrupt. What I said was that there were many who thought it would be better that the Turkish Empire should vanish; and if Her Majesty's Government wished to save the Turkish Empire they should adopt the only means by which salvation is possible.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The hon. Gentleman did not say he was not one of those who thought so. In answer to the question put by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir G. Campbell), I believe that a great deal has been done to benefit the people of Malta by the recent Mission of Sir Lintorn Simmons. The hon. Member also referred to the appointment of Mr. Clifford Lloyd. I can only say that Mr. Clifford Lloyd, since he has been at

Erzeroum, has been displaying most commendable activity in keeping Her Majesty's Government informed as to the course of events there, and I believe him to be a man of ability, well fitted to serve the country in his present capacity. With regard to the Treaty with Japan, the fact is that the Japanese Government carried on negotiations up to an advanced point and then broke them off, so that they had to be commenced again from the beginning. It is not the case that other nations have concluded Treaties from which we shrink. The United States of America did conclude a Treaty with Japan, but afterwards themselves withdrew from it. Her Majesty's Government are acting in concert with other Powers in endeavouring to obtain full recognition of the rights of foreigners in the Japanese Courts on terms which will be honourable to the Japanese, and at the same time acceptable and satisfactory to Europeans. With regard to the suggestion that we should exchange the New Hebrides for Newfoundland, I should like to ask what the Australians would say to that? With regard to the hon. Member's remarks about the Oil Rivers, no step will be taken without the House being informed. On the subject of slavery in East Africa, and especially within the sphere of influence of the East Africa Company, the hon. Member says that I have refused information. I must refer hon. Members to an answer given by me on May 15, when I said—

> "Her Majesty's Government are informed that the British East Africa Company have approved a proclamation issued by their administrator in Zanzibar with the assent of the chiefs and the peoples concerned, decreeing immunity from slavery within a certain area in the company's territory, and beyond the ten mile limit. It is understood that the proclamation does not affect the *status* of slavery as at present existing."

It should be observed that we have not acquired territory at present, and that we are only carrying on a system of trade under engagements with the tribes. It is only in the seaport towns that actual administration is at present possible. It must be remembered that the British East Africa Company cannot change the whole domestic institutions of the regions between the sea and the Great Lakes by a stroke of the pen. They must move by cautious steps, endeavour to introduce free labour in the place of slavery, to redeem as many slaves as possible from servitude, and to wean the people to better courses. The East Africa Company has already been instrumental in freeing thousands of slaves. In this connection I may explain a point which seems to have been misunderstood. Certain slaves having taken refuge from their masters within the area of the company's influence, the company advanced money to enable them to redeem themselves. The company then allowed them to work out the money advanced on easy terms, but their freedom had already been secured, and many of them repaid the debt by work in three or four months' time. With respect to the coolies engaged for labour on the Congo, I have to say that all persons connected with the East Africa Company are careful not to make any bargains with slave-owners. The bargains are made with the slaves themselves, who have the right to make such engagements, the arrangement being, I believe, that they pay half the wages they earn to their owners. I trust that whilst we are connected with East Africa free labour will more and more take the place of slave labour until finally the latter shall be a thing of the past.

(12.24.) MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I wish to ask a question with reference to the Duke of Norfolk's visit to Rome. It has been represented by Her Majesty's Government that he went to Rome as a private gentleman, and not as an envoy. However, in the Parliamentary Papers issued in connection with Sir Lintorn Simmons's Mission to Rome, I find that the Pope in one of his speeches distinctly spoke of the "Duke of Norfolk's Mission." I wish to know whether the Government still adhere to their original representation in face of this statement of the Holy Father? I desire now to call attention to another matter, and to move the reduction of the Vote by £600, the amount of the salary of the British Consul at New York. The House will remember that on March 4 my hon.

Friend the Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. Harrington) called attention to a series of messages which had passed between Mr. Soames, solicitor to the *Times*, and his private agent in New York, Mr. Thompson. One of these messages from Mr. Soames, dated April 1, 1889, ran as follows :—

> "Hoare, British Consul, has authority to give you names of some informants like Major Le Caron. See him; get all particulars, and induce one or two men to come over."

Upon April 2 the private agent replied—

> "All informers' reports including those from Philadelphia passed through his (the Consul's) hands up to 1884. If he does not know names himself, he can refer you to those who do."

Now, the duties of a Consul are perfectly well understood. He is a public officer discharging a public function in the interests of his country and for the benefit of British subjects. The charges in relation to these telegrams were previously made in the presence of the Attorney General (Sir R. Webster) and other Members of the Government, and they were repeated by myself a few days afterwards. We challenged inquiry and called for a reply. But the Government have given no reply; they have maintained an absolute silence on the matter from that day to this. In the absence, then, of any reply or explanation, we may take it that the facts are admitted. If you need detectives you should employ men as detectives and pay them as such, either by money voted for the Secret Service Fund or by the Vote for the Detective Service; but I maintain it is not permissible to you to use the public funds voted for a specific purpose, the payment of a British Consul, and employ that official in the work of a detective for private parties. It may not be too late for the Government to offer explanation—if they have any to offer—of a transaction which I think I am justified in stigmatising as disgraceful. I could add something more grave in regard to the conduct of Mr. Hoare if inquiry were granted; but, meantime, I move the reduction of the Vote.

Amendment proposed, to leave out "£307,909," in order to insert "£307,309."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

Question proposed, "That '£307,909' stand part of the Resolution."

*(12.31.) SIR J. FERGUSSON: I hope I may be pardoned, though I may not be strictly in order, if I reply to the first question of the hon. Member, for though it is not germane to the Amendment before us I do not wish to let it pass without a reply. The hon. Member has not observed that the Duke of Norfolk was sent on a Mission to the Vatican by Her Majesty to congratulate His Holiness upon the attainment of his year of Jubilee, and that explains the reference to a Mission in the words the hon. Member has quoted. On a former occasion when the Duke of Norfolk went to Rome he had no sort of Mission, and it is by mixing up two occurrences perfectly distinct that confusion has arisen. With regard to the matter upon which the hon. Member has moved an Amendment, I know nothing of it whatever. I do not believe that the British Consul at New York was ever employed for any purpose of the kind alleged. I can only say that it is quite unknown to me; and, as I am cognisant of every Paper passing through the Foreign Office, I may be allowed to express my opinion that what is alleged has never taken place.

(12.32.) MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): A more extraordinary answer was never given by the Government to a distinct and definite charge. The right hon. Gentleman has stated that, because he is cognisant of all Papers passing through the Foreign Office and found no mention of these transactions, he is convinced such transactions never took place. But this is no disproof or even answer. Such transactions have nothing whatever to do with the Foreign Office, and would not appear on the face of any Foreign Office communication. The contention of my hon. Friend is not that the Consul was directed to take action as the agent of the Treasury, but that the Consul, if these allegations are true, prostituted his office and became an agent or spy for the agent of the *Times.* The Government were informed of the facts some time ago, but they have deliberately shut their eyes and abstained from any inquiry. Has the right hon. Gentleman stated that inquiries have been made as to whether the Consul at New York did do this thing or not? It is perfectly manifest, from the answer of the right hon. Gentleman to my hon. Friend, that he regards the charge as most disgraceful and scandalous. The right hon. Gentleman must have known of these cablegrams. They were alluded to in the House, and they were made matter of argument, and none of the agents of the *Times* have denied them or contested their authenticity. Under the circumstances, I think the Foreign Office is bound to meet these charges, and at the very least the Government are bound to state that they will undertake to inquire from Mr. Hoare whether he did or did not act in this utterly unjustifiable and scandalous way, and if he did lend himself to the agent of the *Times*, he should be called to account for his conduct. I think my hon. Friend's charge has been met in a manner almost unparalleled. Let the leading counsel for the *Times*, who is sitting there, and should know all about the matter, get up and state that of his own knowledge there is no truth in the statement. If he does not do that every Member in the House will be justified in believing that the statement is undoubtedly true. It is perfectly useless for the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs to say he does not know anything about it; that is no answer. The only answer we can accept as satisfactory is for a Member of the Government to get up and say that he has made inquiry; that he has satisfied himself, and can state, on his word of honour, that the cablegrams are false, and have no foundation. I ask the House to listen to the statement in the cablegrams that they may understand the nature of the charge. These cablegrams were read in the House on March 4th last, and there has been ample time, therefore, for the Foreign Office to make inquiry as to the truth:—

> "1st April, 1889, London—To Johstone, Gilsey House, New York—Hoare, British Consul, has authority to give you names of some informants like Major Le Caron. See him; get all particulars, and induce one or two men to come over. Assistance will be sent you for Millen."

Did the Foreign Office give any authority such as is here alluded to to Soames? Then, on the following day, another message was sent,—

> "All informers' reports, including those from Philadelphia, passed through his hands up to 1884, and were sent by me here. If he does not know names himself, he can refer you to those who do."

Now, will the hon. Baronet stand up and say that of his own knowledge he can state to the House that Mr. Hoare gave no assistance of the kind? He has had four months' notice of the charge; and if he can give us no such answer, we are still entitled to believe the charge is true; and if it is true, Mr. Hoare is not worthy to represent this country for another week. We do not pay our Consuls to act as private agents for any newspaper. We are entitled to know more of this matter before the Vote is agreed to, and, under the circumstances, I think the House will feel we are entitled to press for a definite answer to this charge.

(12.40.) MR. M. HEALY (Cork): I am very much surprised that no answer is forthcoming. I may call attention to the fact that the Attorney General has already practically admitted the authenticity of the cablegrams. This is not the first time that they have been referred to in the House, and the right hon. Gentleman has already spoken in reference to them. The only thing the Under Secretary will undertake to say is that he himself knows nothing of them. But although the Attorney General has had the opportunity of consulting with Mr. Soames, and, though he did, as we understand, consult with him, Mr. Soames has never denied the authenticity of the cablegrams; and until to-night, in the form in which the Under Secretary has put it, there has been no attempt to deny their authenticity. Really it is monstrous, under the circumstances, that Members of the Government should sit there silent in the face of these charges. I ask that we shall have a reply, and, as the Government cannot or will not give a reply, I beg to move the adjournment of the Debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Maurice Healy.*)

(12.42.) COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I really do not know which way to vote, but I shall be prepared to vote for the Government if the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs will deny that our Consul at New York had anything to do with the *Times'* case, directly or indirectly. If the right hon. Gentleman will make that statement I shall be quite satisfied.

(12.42.) MR. SEXTON: My hon. Friend has made a suggestion which, if met, would probably end this matter for the present. It would be satisfactory if we had a promise of inquiry into the conduct of the Consul. Manifestly, it would be absurd to suppose that we can be content with the reply of the Under Secretary. Of course, it is not to be supposed that, if a Consul were engaged in participation in a disgraceful conspiracy to defame Members of this House, an account of his proceedings would be found on the records of the Foreign Office But we ask for an inquiry which, if diligent and searching, will elicit the facts of the case. I do not wish to delay the House, and only rise now to endeavour to ascertain whether the Government are disposed to assent to the very reasonable proposal of my hon. Friend the Member for Mayo that the Foreign Office should undertake to make a prompt official inquiry.

*(12.43.) SIR J. FERGUSSON: I confess to being altogether taken by surprise by this question that has been raised, and I do not think the House will wonder at that. I have no knowledge of the matters referred to, and I never heard of these cablegrams until to-night. But this I will say, that upon the only point I have heard mentioned in which the Foreign Office is concerned, the statement that authority was given to the British Consul at New York to answer questions concerning witnesses upon that definite statement, I will undertake to make inquiry. Beyond that it is impossible for me to make any further answer now.

(12.44.) MR. DILLON: The right hon. Gentleman is not quite correct in stating that that is the only definite charge; that is only one of them. The main thing is whether, with authority or without, the Consul did confer with the agent of the *Times*, and lend the machinery of his office and the knowledge acquired in his official position as Agent of Her Majesty's Government in New York to the assistance ot the *Times* representative.

(12.44.) THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): It is not possible for me, I think, upon a Motion for Adjournment, to enter fully into the questions raised without a breach of the Rules of Order. All I can say is that I had these telegrams before me and saw them for the first time when they were referred to by the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. Harrington) during the Debate upon the Report of the Special Commission. I gave an answer then which, though I do not suppose it satisfied hon. Members opposite, satisfied the majority of the House. I at that time stated the fact that I had never heard of the telegrams; that I knew nothing of them; and that, so far as I knew, Mr. Hoare, the Consul at New York had nothing to do with the conduct of the *Times'* case. The statement I made then I now repeat. Never in my conduct of the case had I had any information from Mr. Hoare, whose name I did not know.

*(12.45.) MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): The Attorney General seems to think, because he has no information, what is complained of cannot have happened. That, surely, is a strange doctrine——

*MR. SPEAKER: The Question before the House is the Motion for the Adjournment of the Debate.

*MR. J. E. ELLIS: It is upon that Motion, Sir, I desire to say a word or two. What has been said by the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs really strengthens the reasons for adjournment.

I would appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, I suppose, is leading the House at the moment. Here we have a Vote, in which is included payment to British Consuls, and the conduct of one of these officials has been seriously challenged. It is quite obvious that the Under Secretary is without information which might enable him to contradict these very serious charges. I am quite sure that any hon. or right hon. Gentleman being in possession of serious charges against a subordinate would suspend payment until those charges were investigated. I think it is only fair to a Member of Her Majesty's Service that we should suspend action until a direct official contradiction can be given. I do hope, therefore, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will consent to the postponement of the Vote.

(12.48.) THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): We cannot consent to an adjournment of the Debate. The money has been voted in Committee, and we are now on the Report Stage, which has been deferred to suit the convenience of hon. Gentlemen opposite. This point, so far as my recollection goes, was not raised in Committee.

An hon. MEMBER: There was no time.

MR. GOSCHEN: No intimation was given that this point would be raised, and we cannot consent to a further postponement of the Report. But hon. Members are fully entitled to put down a question on the Paper, and if they will do so, and give sufficient notice, full inquiry shall be made and answer given to these allegations. We cannot, by assenting to an adjournment, admit that there is a *primâ facie* case against this official.

(12.49.) MR. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I submit that what the right hon. Gentleman intends for an answer is no answer at all. It is perfectly true that it is open to any Member to ask a question as to the conduct of any official, but it is also true that this is the last stage upon which that official's salary can effectually be dealt with. If this Report is passed, the Government will

be put in funds for the whole of this official's salary, and, practically, the matter then becomes unchallengeable. Now, this is a charge of a grave dereliction of public duty on the part of a certain official, details of names, dates, and circumstances have been put forward, the charge is put forward in the clearest, most direct way, and the Government are bound to take notice of it. But they have sat in silence, refusing or neglecting to give any information. What other course is, then, open to us than to move the adjournment, in order that the Government, by a 24 hours' delay, can ascertain from the incriminated official whether he is in a position to repudiate the charge or not? Of course, the Under Secretary cannot now give us the information. It is not to be supposed that he has any special information in relation to this matter, and we know in connection with the Parnell Commission there has been a careful suppression of information. But it is very easy to obtain information in the present instance. All that is required is to telegraph to New York and ask this officer if he is in a position to deny, or is obliged to admit, the truth of the charge made. A direct categorical answer would be forthcoming when the House meets again, and on Monday the Vote will be disposed of without further opposition. But that the Vote should be passed without any explanation scarcely becomes the gravity of the allegation.

*(12.53.) MR. BRYCE: It seems to me that a strong case has been made out for adjournment, unless the Government are prepared to give a far more complete pledge than as yet they have given; a promise not only that inquiry shall be made, but that the House shall have the opportunity of debating the result of that inquiry. This is not a new matter. We fully accept the statements of the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and the Attorney General, that they have told us all they know of it, and the language of the Under Secretary shows that he looks upon this as a very grave charge fully deserving investigation. But neither he nor the Attorney General are able to give us any information, and, on

the other hand, the only suggestion made is that a question should be put down for answer at Question time. But this is not at all the manner in which a matter of this gravity should be dealt with. Since March 4th the Government have known of these allegations, and inquiry might have been made of Mr. Soames, and the whole affair probed to the bottom in the interval. The House is in possession of some control over the matter now, and ought not lightly to part with it. I am unwilling to give a Vote for delay, but I shall be justified in doing so unless we have a promise from the Government that they will institute inquiry into the whole matter raised by these telegrams, and give the House the opportunity of considering it. It is our duty to make a protest against the *laches* of the Government in not at once investigating these grave charges against one of Her Majesty's Consuls.

(12.55.) The House divided :—Ayes 58; Noes 127.—(Div. List, No. 119.)

Question again proposed, "That £307,909 stand part of the Resolution."

(1.6.) THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): This matter need not be discussed at great length, because it is evident there is no real foundation for the adverse criticism on which the proposed reduction of the salary is based. The statement is that Mr. Soames telegraphed to an agent of the *Times* in America, and asserted that Mr. Hoare had authority to give certain information. The whole charge is based upon that. In the series of telegrams it appears that this agent of the *Times* in America, with whom Mr. Soames was in communication, went to Consul Hoare, who was civil and would tell him nothing.

MR. SEXTON: That is not all. It was stated that Mr. Hoare could not assist in any way. Of course he could not give facts against Irish Members which did not exist. But it was stated that "All informers' Reports passed through his hands and were sent by me here." The word is printed "sent," but in the original it is "seen." They were shown by Mr. Hoare to the private agent; and it is said, "If he does not know the names himself he can refer you to those who do."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that the telegram stating that Mr. Hoare was civil stands by itself and does not form part of a longer telegram. In any case, if a grave offence was committed, it was committed by the Government at home, who gave this imaginary authority to Consul Hoare. The offence, if there was one, was committed by some official in England, and not by Mr. Hoare, and if Mr. Hoare had given any information he would have given it under orders. Therefore, it is not Consul Hoare's salary that ought to be reduced. If any inquiry is desired into this imaginary transaction as to the authority given by some official in England a question may be put on the Paper and the information given in reply thereto.

(1.9.) MR. SEXTON: The question is, Is the British Consul at New York an intermediary for the transmission of the Reports of spies and informers?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Mr. Soames apparently knew that certain Reports had been seen in London. If anyone is to blame it is people in London, and not Consul Hoare.

(1.10.) MR. KNOX (Cavan, W): In the first place I think the Attorney General ought not to have assumed that this was a direct attack upon him. It was the intention of the hon. Member who raised this discussion to attack the British Consul at New York.

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I never suggested it was an attack upon me.

*MR. KNOX: The Attorney General said he had answered the allegations of my hon. Friend the Member for the Harbour Division three months ago. I confess I have looked carefully through the speech he delivered on that occasion. Although he dealt at length with certain other allegations as to the negotiations with Sheridan, I cannot find any reference to this matter, which, surely, is a most serious one. In a civilised country the main duties of a Consul should have regard to commercial matters only, and should have nothing to do with police matters. But if Mr. Soames is correctly informed this Mr. Hoare is a sort of secret police agent of the Government in America. The House ought to have some more definite information on the point, and, in the absence of it, I think my hon. Friend will be justified in pressing this matter to a Division.

(1.15.) MR. E. HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): It seems to me that Mr. Soames made his statements on good authority. All the resources of the country were placed at his disposal, and apparently the Attorney General was his master, or he was attorney to the Attorney General. The character of the Government depended on the result of these transactions, as well as the money of the *Times*. If Mr. Soames was not responsible for these statements will the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or the Chief Secretary, give us the name of the man who was responsible? We often talk of the duties of officials of the British Empire. We think it to be the duty of Her Majesty's Consuls to be the intermediary of friendly relations between different countries, and not to be the tool and instrument of political Parties in making accusations against the characters of other persons; that is what has been done in this case. The Government have not the manliness to defend this Consul; they simply fall back on the excuse, they do not know whether he did what is alleged, and add that if he did he had no authority for his action.

*(1.21.) MR. BRYCE: There are two totally different questions before us. It would be most unjust to blame Mr. Hoare for anything which he did at the command of his official superiors, but, of course, if he acted as is alleged, and acted in concert with the agent of the *Times* on his own responsibility, the matter bears a totally different aspect. We have received no adequate explanation on this point, and unless our minds are enlightened, or an undertaking is given of a more complete inquiry, I shall support the reduction of the Vote. If, however, it is shown that Mr. Hoare acted on the authority of the Government, I shall not vote for the reduction.

(1.25.) MR. CRILLY (Mayo, N.): What we want to get at is the position of Mr. Hoare in this matter. He is the Representative of England in New York, and we want to know what authority he had for allowing the agent of the *Times* to inspect his papers and Reports. On that point, the Government have not vouchsafed us any information, and the impression left on my mind is that the Motion for the reduction of this Vote is amply justified by the fact that this Consul identified himself with the agents of the *Times* in a conspiracy to defame and destroy the character of the Irish Parliamentary Representatives. I hold that we are entitled to demand from the Government some more exhaustive and elaborate explanation than we have yet had.

(1.27.) DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I desire to protest in the strongest and most emphatic manner against the conspiracy of silence which has to-night characterised the conduct of the Government. At the outset of this Debate, when these charges were pushed home with so much effect by my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast, the Government sat silent, and this is always their policy when they are not up to their work. We know very well that the Chief Secretary for Ireland, in common with most of Her Majesty's Ministers, is following out the policy of the noble Lord at the head of the Government.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is not speaking to the Amendment.

DR. TANNER: I was trying to address myself to what has taken place in connection with this Debate, and I was just coming to the point of the reduction of this Vote, and the action of this gentleman in America, and the responsibility of the Government for it. I appeal to the common-sense of the House. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members may laugh, but I appeal to the good feeling of the House in this matter, in the hope that it will deal with the matter in a way which I am afraid the present state of feeling will hardly allow——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is not speaking with any relevancy to the matter under discussion.

DR. TANNER: All I want to do is to ask the Government to delay further discussion on the point, in order to give time for a proper inquiry into the circumstances of the case. Telegrams have been read from Belfast by my hon. Friend the Member for Mayo which have not been disproved by the Government, who have entirely failed to establish their case, and yet we are asked to go to a Division on the point at a time when it is impossible for the Press to report what takes place.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The Question is, that the sum of £307,509 stand part of the Resolution.

(1.30.) The House divided:—Ayes 128; Noes 52.—(Div. List, No. 120.)

*MR. SPEAKER: The Question is, that the House agree with the Committee in the said Resolution.

(1.43.) MR. E. HARRINGTON: I submit, Sir, that I am in order in rising to point out——

*MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Gentleman rise to a point of order?

MR. E. HARRINGTON: Yes, Sir, I do. The hon. Member for Mid Cork was addressing the House, and you rose and called him to order because he had not addressed himself to the Vote, whereupon you immediately put the Question. I want to ask whether it is not the custom and practice of the House, and in accordance with the Rules of the House, that the hon. Member should have been requested to resume his seat before the Question was put?

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member resumed his seat without being requested, and then I put the Question.

MR. E. HARRINGTON: I wish to say——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. E. HARRINGTON: On another point——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The Question is, that the House agree with the Committee in the said Resolution.

Main Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

MR. BLANE: There are some other charges against the Consul General at New York. Of course, the House is well aware of the Treaty with the United States of 1792——

MR. TOMLINSON: I rise to order. I wish to ask whether the question of the salary of the Consul General has not been settled?

*MR. SPEAKER: That question is settled already.

MR. BLANE: I wish to direct attention to the general Vote—not upon this particular Consul's salary, but upon the general Vote.

MR. GEDGE rose in his place and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

*MR. SPEAKER: The ayes have it.

DR. TANNER: The noes have it.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is too late.

MR. CONYBEARE: I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, I said "No."

*MR. SPEAKER: Of course, I take the hon. Member's word for it.

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

(1.45.) The House divided:—Ayes 127; Noes 38.—(Div. List, No. 121.)

Question put accordingly, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

(1.55.) The House divided:—Ayes 128; Noes 42.—(Div. List, No. 122.)

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACTS AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 239.)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

(2.9.) MR. CONYBEARE: I object.

[Sir E. CLARKE took the Chair.]

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 agreed to.

MR. CONYBEARE: I object.

Clause 2.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Question is that Clause 2 stand part of the Bill.

MR. CONYBEARE: I objected, Sir, to Clause 1 being taken.

THE CHAIRMAN: No hon. Member moved to report Progress on the Question being put.

MR. CONYBEARE: But I objected.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Question is that Section 2 stand part of the Bill. The hon. Member can now move to report Progress.

MR. CONYBEARE: I did not move that, but I said I objected to Clause 1 being put and carried. I objected, and the Chairman had no business to say—— [*Cries of* "Order!"]

(2.11.) THE CHAIRMAN: When I put the Question, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill," if any hon. Member had said "No," it would have been my duty to leave the Chair, but no one did so. [*Cries of* "Yes."] Do I understand that the hon. Member now moves to report Progress?

DR. TANNER: Usually at such an hour—that is to say, after 12 o'clock—when anyone "objects" the Chairman of Committees, when he is presiding, explains to the hon. Member that such an objection is not valid, but that it is possible for him to prevent the passage of the clause by moving to report Progress. That is the method of procedure adopted by the Chairman of Committees; but on this occasion you, Sir, put the clause and declared it carried in the face of objection, though it was probably made out of form and by mistake.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Question now before the Committee is, "That Clause 2 stand part of the Bill." I put that Question, and if any hon. Member says "No" I at once leave the Chair.

(2.12.) MR. CONYBEARE: As you put Clause 1, in face of my opposition, I want to know what remedy we have and how we can go back to that clause, so as to state our objection to it on some other occasion. I wished to oppose the clause, but I objected altogether to going on with the Bill at this hour. I desire to be informed whether we shall have any opportunity of discussing Clause 1?

(2.13.) MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg): The moment Clause 1 was put several Members said "No." [*Cries of* "Name."]

MR. BRUNNER: I said "No."

MR. HALLEY STEWART: I also said "No."

MR. BRUNNER: Several hon. Members around me said the same, although it may not have reached the Chair.

(2.14.) THE CHAIRMAN: There is no question of order now before the Committee. When I first put the Question there was no negative. Progress has now been moved; therefore, in accordance with the Rules, I now leave the Chair.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

(2.15.) MR. SPEAKER having resumed the Chair,

MR. BRUNNER: May I ask, Mr. Speaker, how far we have got with this Bill?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I know nothing of what passes in Committee.

MOTION.

DRAINAGE AND IMPROVEMENT OF LAND (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Maurice Healy, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Drainage and Improvement of Land in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Maurice Healy, Mr. Deasy, Mr. T. M. Healy, and Mr. Chance.

Bill presented, and read first time [Bill 326.]

House adjourned at a quarter
after Two o'clock till
Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 9th June, 1890.

ROYAL ASSENT—COMMISSION.

The following Bills received the Royal Assent:—

1. Customs and Inland Revenue.
2. Merchant Shipping Acts Amendment.

FACTORS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 83.)

Bill (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

COUNTY COUNCILLORS (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.—(No. 50.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

***THE EARL OF MEATH**: My Lords, as an Alderman of the London County Council, and as a member of the Committee upon which two ladies are at the present time sitting, it would be, perhaps, as well if, in asking your Lordships to read this Bill a second time, I were to give a very short historical sketch of the position of the question at this moment, as well as a statement of the reasons why I think ladies ought to be enabled to sit upon these County Councils. Owing to doubts as to the intention of the Legislature in passing the Local Government Act of 1888, Brixton and Bow elected two ladies to sit on the London County Council, and the London County Council were so aware of the benefit which the presence of women would confer upon them in considering the important questions, especially social questions which came before them, that they were not content with the presence of the two ladies thus elected, but they themselves as a body elected a third lady (Miss Cons) as an Alderman, if that is a proper grammatical expression to make use of. When Lady Sandhurst, as your Lordships are aware, was unseated, Miss Cobden and Miss Cons retired of their own accord from the Council for a twelvemonth; but, in accordance with advice they received, and trusting in a clause of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, to the effect that if their seats were not contested within 12 months their election should be deemed to all intents a good and valid election, they at the end of the 12 months re-took their seats. Since then one of their colleagues (Sir Walter de Souza) has challenged their position, and at this moment the case is in the Law Courts; and if those ladies lose their seats they will be fined £250 each for having given five votes, half of which sum goes to the informer. Whatever the decision of the Courts of Law may be in the case of these two ladies, there is no question that in any future election it will be the duty of the Returning Officer, if a woman's name is put upon the list, to refuse to accept her nomination. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance to those who think it desirable that women should occupy seats on County Councils that this Bill, which I have laid upon the Table, should be passed before the next election in 1892. Now, my Lords, I do not think this is a political question. If it were merely a political question you would not see me standing here taking a prominent part in the discussion. I look upon it as a social question, and more especially as a question of administration. I will go further and say that I do not think that any subject which is a woman's question can be a Party question. Women, in this country at all events, are more than half the population. We all know that women will have their way, and I think it is impossible for any Party in these days to oppose the legitimate aspirations of women. I hope, therefore, that this subject will not be made a Party question, but that in the decision of it the votes which will be given will come from both sides of the House. Now, my Lords, I contend that I am asking for the recognition of no new principle. Women are at present elected to serve on School Boards and Boards of Guardians. They have been elected on School Boards since 1871, and as Poor Law Guardians since 1875. Every year the number of women thus elected increases. In 1871 there were only eight women elected to serve on School Boards; there are now 80. Consequently, I am justified in saying that the administrative capacities of women have approved themselves to the voters, and that their value is now 10 times more recognised than it was in 1871. I think there can be no doubt, from the increase in the numbers of women elected, that they have shown their capacity in carrying out administrative work in those two positions, on Boards of Guardians and on School Boards. The Right Hon. James Stansfeld, on two occasions the head of the Poor Law Department, has said that—

> "It is vain and preposterous to imagine that men can administer the Poor Law as well without as with the assistance of women."

The very recent election of a lady as a Poor Law Guardian in Shadwell, I think, is a proof that electors believe in the truth of that assertion. She was in no way consulted upon the matter, but found one morning that she was elected as a Poor Law Guardian by the electors of that district. Women have shown in those two departments their capacity for administrative work. I contend that the work of the London County Council, at all events, and of a large number of other Councils, is not greatly different from the work of the two bodies I have mentioned—the School Boards and the Boards of Guardians. What is the work of the London County Council which we specially want women's aid in? One of the most important considerations is that we in the London County Council have under our charge a large number of babies, who are placed in what are called baby farms; and I think it is simply ridiculous to expect men to go and inspect these babies and report upon them. We want women to do that kind of work. There are certain kinds of work which women are more capable of doing than men, and I assert that use ought to be made of women in every way in which they can possibly be made useful, and that they should be assisted to take their place in the affairs of Local Government. Then, besides baby farms, there are female industrial schools. Not only are women more capable than men of looking after girls, but they are more capable of looking after the boys also. Then there are a large number of female lunatics under the charge of the Council. There are at this moment 9,280 pauper lunatics under their charge. In Hanwell alone there are 1,900, and of those 1,900, 1,100 are women. One of our Committees went down the other day to inspect that lunatic asylum, and in passing through the wards the members witnessed, as usual, the saddest scenes. One of the women patients approached, and, addressing one of the members of the Committee, said, "What business have you here, sir?" and the gentleman addressed felt the truth of the remark, for he had been witnessing what could only be called very indecent exhibitions, which, of course, the poor women themselves were perfectly unconscious of. He felt, therefore, that there was a great deal of truth in what that poor half-witted woman said to him. In addition to those subjects which are essentially work for women, there are other matters upon which women are quite as competent as men to form an opinion. Those subjects are hygiene, sanitation, the housing of the working classes (four-fifths of whom are women and children), matters relating to the well-being of the poorer classes, and social reforms generally. I assert that women, as a general rule, are more fitted than men to discuss and determine social questions and matters of detail of that character, and for this reason: There are a larger number of women of leisure who are occupied in going in and out among the poorer classes, and who have practical knowledge of the suffering and needs of those poor creatures. It is, therefore, distinctly in the interests of the poor men and women that women should be admitted to serve on the County Councils. It is not a question for the rich; it is a question for the poor, and I ask your Lordships, in justice to the poor, to pass this Bill. We have heard it said, however, that women have a heart, but not an intellect. I think, my Lords, that what we have been enabled to read in the newspapers within the last day or two will prove the contrary of that doctrine. I think, my Lords, the triumphs of Mrs. Butler and Miss Fawcett will show that women are capable of doing all, intellectually, that men can achieve. Indeed, I think we may take a higher ground, and say that it is the duty of those who oppose this measure to prove that women are not capable of doing the work. If there were any force in the arguments used by those who do not desire to see women sitting on the

County Councils, they would only show that the electors who have returned the ladies to serve on the School Boards and Boards of Guardians have not known what is the best thing for their own interests. After an experience of 18 months, you find that the London County Council are sending in a Petition, which I have presented to-day, signed by 75 members, a majority of the Council, advocating the passing of this Bill. I hold in my hand, also, a list (which I am not going to trouble your Lordships by reading through) of all the clubs and associations and public meetings which have sent me Petitions and resolutions in favour of the Bill. I find that there are 21 in London and 35 in the Provinces, representing, I venture to say, a very large number of women throughout the country. As another proof that the London County Council appreciate the presence of ladies among them, I may mention that when Miss Cons and Miss Cobden retired for a twelvemonth from the Council they were invited to sit as visitors on the Committee on which they were then serving as members for the purpose of giving their advice, as they could not vote. I said just now that I think women are more capable of dealing with social matters than men, owing to their practical experience, and perhaps it may not be generally known how large is the number of educated and refined ladies who are occupied in benevolent and charitable work, going in and out among the dwellings of the poor. In one Society alone, of which I know, there are 28,942 women so employed, all ladies of birth or education. That is only one instance, and there are many other societies of a similar character. The fact is, that women have more leisure than men. Then it may be said, "Why cannot you ask these ladies to attend as visitors to act and give their assistance in that way?" Of course, it is better they should be there as visitors than not at all; but there is this very great difference: that if they are elected and placed upon the Councils they will be able to visit these institutions with some authority, not as busybodies, and point out with authority what is wrong, and come back and defend in the Council Chamber the action they have taken. The London County Council passed a resolution not long ago to erect a model lodging-house. Now, I ask your Lordships whether you do not think that the advice of women would be invaluable in the arrangement and management of such an institution as that? I will tell your Lordships one thing which will show why we members of the London County Council believe we cannot properly do our work without the assistance of women. We are not going to erect lodging-houses for women. We are doing so for men, though lodging-houses are a great deal more wanted for women; but we are holding back because we feel that we ourselves dare not erect lodging-houses for women as long as we have not more ladies on the Council to direct and manage them. The other day one of our Committees went to visit one of our institutions. On that Committee were seven gentlemen and one lady. Part of their duty was to inspect the wash-houses. The seven gentlemen marched through the wash-houses, the lady following meekly behind. Well, the gentlemen admired everything—they never saw anything so magnificent and beautiful, and they praised the officials up to the skies. But the lady hung back a little and examined for herself, and when she came out she had not quite such a seraphic look of contentment upon her face as the other members of the Committee. She told them some of the arrangements were not quite so good as they thought, and she brought them back. They found out a good many things which, if allowed to pass, might have led to mischief, especially to contagious diseases and ophthalmia. I think, therefore, that women's aptitude for details would do a great deal to improve our institutions and buildings. Then another consideration is, that we are becoming more democratic. We know from the experience they have had in America that, although democratic institutions have their good points, they have their weak ones. We have seen that in America in Municipal elections and in Local Government affairs there has been a great deal of jobbery and corruption. Women are not so open to those temptations as are men, and I venture to assert that if there were more women upon our County Councils there would be less danger in that particular direction. Then, again, my Lords, I do not think that anyone can be perfectly satisfied with the order, decency, and cleanliness of our streets. I do not know anything more filthy and disgusting than the streets of London. In walking through them on a windy day, one is blinded by the flying dust and covered with mud in wet weather. Women's love of order and cleanliness would do a great deal to remedy what may fairly be considered a disgrace to the streets of London. Woman's love of the beautiful, also, would not tolerate miles of houses without trees, shrubs, and flowers. Women, too, would not be satisfied with a merely physical cleansing of our cities; they would undoubtedly, also, do their best to effect a moral cleansing as well. They would also use their influence on behalf of temperance, providing open spaces, the erection of model lodging-houses, public baths, the inspection of markets, cow-houses, and dairies, slaughter-houses (and a most important matter in connection with slaughter-houses is the prevention of cruelty there), the suppression of houses of ill-fame, the prevention of indecent exhibitions, enforcing measures with regard to the adulteration of food and the pollution of water, and in many other directions. Those are all subjects on which I feel confident that women could give valuable assistance. Can it be doubted that if we could get such women as Miss Octavia Hill and Mrs. Fawcett elected upon the London County Council we should vastly benefit thereby? My Lords, after this discussion is closed, your Lordships will consider the great subject of sweating which has been brought to your notice by the noble Lord opposite (Lord Dunraven). I venture to say that if our Municipal Bodies did their duty, and if the various Local Bodies of this vast Metropolis did their duty—I do not say that they would be able to cure these evils—they could not do that, but at all events they would not be nearly so bad as they are at present. But I do think one way of checking these evils is to obtain the services of as many educated and refined women as you can with leisure on their hands to assist the Local Vestries, the London County Council, and in the future the District County Councils to do their duty. My Lords, publicans, slum-owners, and jerry-builders have too long held the field. They it is who, as a general rule, have managed to get themselves elected upon the small Local Bodies; and I do think it is time that those who get themselves elected upon those Local Bodies, in a great measure for the purpose of stopping reforms, should give place to those who will take their seats for the purpose of promoting and advancing reforms. I think, my Lords, in enabling women to take their seats on the County Councils and District Councils you may feel confident that you will not be adding to those who, by reason of the temptations to which they may be exposed, will be disposed rather to hinder reform than to advance it. Women are asking for this privilege in very large numbers, as is shown by the Petitions and resolutions which I have placed upon your Lordships' Table. Whether they succeed this year or the next, of this, at all events, I am confident, that within a comparatively short period they will have gained their object, and it will be a matter of astonishment to succeeding generations that for so many years women should have been excluded from the Local Government of their country.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(The Lord Chaworth, *E. Meath.*)

*EARL COWPER: My Lords, it is with great deference to your Lordships and to my noble Friend that I venture to move that this Bill be read a second time this day six months. In dealing with this subject I hope to treat it in a serious manner. I think it has too often been the case, when Female Suffrage and other matters of that kind have been alluded to, that it has been attempted to put them aside with a joke or a sneer, and to treat them in an unbecoming way. Certainly, I will not fall into any fault of that kind. My Lords, I do not think that the noble Earl who has brought forward this measure has quite done justice to the great body to which he belongs—the London County Council. His speech would lead one to believe that the duties of County Councillors are, to a great extent, to go about and personally inspect Lunatic Asylums, male and female; to superintend baby farms, and to superintend reformatories—in fact, to act the part of District Visitors throughout the Metropolis. But the London County Council is a body of the very highest importance;

hardly second in importance to the House of Commons itself. I think the difference between the London County Council and the House of Commons is more with regard to the magnitude of the interests involved and the universality of the interests involved in the one case compared to the other than in any difference actually in kind. Though, of course, the interests with which the London County Council are concerned are not so great as those dealt with by the House of Commons, yet they are undoubtedly enormous. One has only to look through the eloquent address which was made by my noble Friend Lord Rosebery to the body over which he so worthily presides to see how great those interests are. We have only to look casually at the newspapers in order to see the enormous number of meetings they held in the year, the number of Committees appointed, the enormous sums of money which can be spent by those Committees, and the great interests involved in their proceedings. We saw on one occasion there was a question debated in which more than £1,000,000 was concerned. In fact, the interests are perfectly gigantic, and they will continually increase, because I have no doubt that in a short time the County Council will have to exercise a more direct influence over paving and lighting matters, and those sort of things. There is no doubt that they will have more entirely the business committed to them which is now transacted by Local Bodies, as well as much of that now undertaken by Government; and great as their business now is it will be much greater in a few years; in fact, it will certainly become nothing less than the administration in all branches of the affairs of more than 4,000,000 of people. My Lords, I cannot but think that if we admit women into the London County Council there will be really no valid reason why we should not admit them into the House of Commons. I do not think anybody can show that there is much difference between the two cases; perhaps some attempt to do so may be made in the course of this Debate. The County Council, like the House of Commons, do a great deal of their work in open assembly; but they also do a great deal of their work by Committees, and many of those Committees are concerned with subjects in which women and children are most intimately interested; and I believe that on many Committees of your Lordships' House and the other House of Parliament there are subjects discussed, with regard to which it may be said that the presence of women upon them would be most advantageous. I daresay, for example, that Committee of which we have heard so much lately—the Sweating Committee—might have been much better for the presence of a lady on it; and I am not sure that in Debate in this or the other House light might not he thrown upon the subjects discussed, and great benefit derived from the presence of women. My Lords, my object in making these remarks is to show that the subject which we are to-night discussing is only part of a larger question; and if we go so far as is suggested by the Bill before us we must, I think, logically go a great deal further. In fact, the great question is forced upon us, to a certain extent, whether we are or are not to undertake the gigantic experiment of placing women on a political equality with men. Now, my Lords, I, for one, must say that I am opposed to this, and I am opposed to it chiefly in the interests of women themselves. Nobody is more aware than I am of the enormous influence for good of women in this world. It would be foolish to deny it; but I think this influence, great as it is, is generally in proportion to their unobtrusiveness. I think most of us, from our own personal experience, may well say that those women who have gone to their graves having done most real good—having exercised the best, the highest sort of influence, and performed best those purposes for which a human being is sent into the world—are those women whose names have very often never been heard of beyond their own immediate circle. My Lords, I will notice an historical fact, and I do it for a certain purpose, which I will explain. It is obvious to everybody that the great influence of women for good in this world arose very much with the dawn of Christianity, and was very closely associated with it. We may see this by comparing the position of women in Christian countries with that held by them in Pagan and Mahomedan communities, and in countries where other religions than Christianity prevail. From the time of the New Testament downwards women have filled a great place in human history. There has been as many women as men among the saints. But from the time of the Apostles women have been most strenuously discouraged in making an appearance as preachers and speakers upon public platforms. This tends to prove that the best and highest influence of women is perfectly consistent with abstaining from publicity. I am very desirous that those who take the line I do should not be accused of wishing to treat women as mere dolls, and that any nonsense of that sort should not be attributed to them. I would repudiate any suggestion of that sort. On the contrary, we take that line because we are so conscious of the present high position of women, and because we are so anxious that they should not be contaminated by the deteriorating influences of political life, the struggles and enmities, and bitterness; and, I might almost say, the vulgarities of public life, that we wish to guard women from them. I am not quite sure whether the rough and tumble of political life always exercises the most ennobling effect even upon men. I am not sure that the violent Party animosities, the one-sidedness, the virulent personalities, and the misrepresentations which often distinguish even the best people in political life when their passions are excited—and all these distinguish political life perhaps more frequently in the present day than in former times—do not sometimes exercise a rather deteriorating effect upon the men. Men must, of course, take part in the affairs of the country, and in carrying on the public business must submit themselves to these things, though there is no doubt that only a strong nature can shake off what I may call the dirty part of the business without its leaving any permanent traces behind. But for Heaven's sake, my Lords, let us shield women from this as long as we possibly can. Some people say that women would exercise an elevating effect upon public life, and would raise it and free it from many of those evils. I am by no means sure of that. On the contrary, I fear that women, with their more excitable natures, and their tendency to look at things more from a personal and concrete than an abstract point of view, would be liable, even more than men, to the deteriorating effects of the platform. It is very likely, and I believe it will be the case, that even if this Bill should pass the best and highest of women will, with few exceptions, still prefer the shade; but even if the best women could be dragged forward into the glare of publicity I do not think their presence would enable us to take a calmer or more philosophic position in our discussions. But, my Lords, all the objections which I have mentioned would have to give way if it could really be shown that it was necessary for the good conduct of affairs, either in the House of Commons or in the County Council, that women should take part. I do not think this has been shown, or can be shown; and for these reasons I beg to move that this Bill be read this day six months.

Amendment moved to leave out the word "now," and add at the end of the Motion the words "this day six months."—(*The Earl Cowper.*)

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, I am quite sure that nobody can have listened to the speech of my noble Friend and have thought for one moment that he was actuated in the course which he has taken to-night by anything except the deepest respect for the women whose interests are being discussed upon this occasion, and for those who are desirous to uphold their rightful position. But, my Lords, it seems to me that the arguments of my noble Friend have been based throughout his speech upon the principle of *principiis obsta.* That is a principle which we have heard applied to a great number of reforms throughout our lives; but I venture to think my noble Friend is in error in the close comparison he has instituted between the duties of the County Council and the duties of the House of Commons. It is because my noble Friend thinks that the duties of these two bodies are so similar, and because he greatly desires to debar women from the Parliamentary franchise and from the House of Commons, that he is so fearful of their being admitted to the County Council. My Lords, it seems to me that it is a mistake to select the Houses of Parliament as the Public Bodies which County Councils most resemble. The business of the County Council is not legislative business; the business of the Houses of Parliament is, in the main, legislative. The County Councils are almost entirely Administrative Bodies. They carry on their administration, no doubt, mainly in committees, which report to the Councils, who then pass resolutions; but almost the whole of their functions are of an administrative character, and it is because of that administrative character that it seems to me that the assistance of women upon those bodies would be so valuable. My noble Friend has very much deprecated the meddling, if I may so call it, of women in political life. Well, my Lords, we see a good deal of the interference of ladies in political life in these days, and I am bound to say I do not think that that interference is always precisely of the kind that we should most desire. I think it would be far preferable that they should take such a part in the administration of local affairs in County Councils as they already do upon School Boards and Boards of Guardians, than that they should take the part they sometimes do in the keen contests of political life. My noble Friend who has moved the Second Reading of this Bill has touched so largely upon the functions of County Councils, in which he thinks women might take a useful part, that there is no need for me to go over that ground again; but as he has spoken mainly from his point of view as a member of the County Council of the greatest City in England, I may be, perhaps, permitted to say a word from the point of view of the Provincial County Councils. I do feel very strongly that there are portions of the duties which fall to Provincial County Councils in which the assistance of women would be a great advantage. There is one subject especially which my noble Friend has alluded to, namely, the management of lunatic asylums. I do think that there, particularly in regard to female lunatics, the assistance and inspection of ladies would be of the greatest advantage. But to be thoroughly useful it must be an inspection combined with authority, and it is only as members of the body managing those asylums that they could really take an effective part in supervising and controlling the administration. My noble Friend who has just sat down spoke slightingly, by-the-bye, of the inspection of lunatic asylums, reformatories, and other institutions of that kind by members of County Councils, and he seemed to hold that it was not the duty of members of the Council to undertake any such inspection. I am sorry to say I entirely differ from my noble Friend in that respect. I do not think our lunatic asylums in the country would be well administered unless they were inspected regularly by the Asylums Committee; and if the Asylums Committee and the County Council take that part, which the old bodies used to take, of inspecting minutely all that goes on in those asylums, I venture to say that in that respect the assistance of women, having the full authority of the County Council, would be of great advantage. But, my Lords, there is one portion of the question which we are discussing to-night upon which my noble Friend touched very slightly, and upon which I should like, if I may be permitted, to say a few words. At the present moment, under the Act of 1888, you have included a large number of women among the electors of members of the County Councils. That was deliberately done. There was a great deal to be said in regard to taking the Parliamentary franchise instead of the Municipal franchise; it would have been much more convenient in many ways if you had taken the same franchise for the County Council as for Members of Parliament, but you deliberately chose to take the Municipal franchise, and thereby to place a large number of votes in the hands of women. Now, my Lords, is it consistent in that case that you should say to those female electors, who are quite numerous enough everywhere, I take it, to turn a closely contested election, "You may vote, but you shall not be yourselves elected." I think, my Lords, that if ever the day comes (though I wish to keep off that discussion to-night) when the Parliamentary franchise is given to women there will be a strong argument in favour of extending their right beyond the franchise. But it is not only in that respect that this matter is to be considered. We have been reminded that women are elected as members of School

Boards, and Boards of Guardians. Are you going to prevent women sitting upon the District Councils when created when they sit already on the Boards of Guardians? If the District Councils take over the duties of Boards of Guardians, are you going to let women sit on them? If you are going to keep up the two Bodies separately, are they to sit on one Body and not on the other? At the present moment, sitting on the Boards of Guardians, they deal with sanitary questions; they are members of Rural Sanitary Authorities; are you going to turn them off from dealing with those subjects in regard to which they have shown themselves to be very useful? I think that is a consideration of great weight. I defy you to keep them off the County Councils if you admit them to the District Councils. I say, therefore, do the thing graciously when you have the opportunity, and do not wait to be forced by the logic of the situation into granting that which in the end you will find you must grant. My noble Friend has told us that there are now 80 women members of the School Boards in this country. Well, it has taken 20 years to get 80 women on the School Boards. I do not know the total number of the members of those Boards. But 80 is not a very large number, and there need be no fear that if you give the county electors the power of choosing women they will do so to an excessive extent. I do think it is unwise, in dealing with the administration of those local matters with which County Councils are intrusted, that you should deny to the electors the power of selecting women members if they think fit.

*THE EARL OF JERSEY: My Lords, the noble Marquess has touched upon the question of the District Councils, but I think it will be time enough to consider the question whether women should belong to those Councils when a Bill on the subject is brought forward. Considering that most of the County Council elections are conducted upon political grounds, I do not see how the ladies would have much chance of getting in, unless they were to take a very active part in public matters, and they would then be liable to those evils to which the noble Earl opposite has alluded. Now, I quite admit what the noble Lord who introduced this Bill has said with regard to the work of women in many capacities. I think many of those ladies whose names he has mentioned, like Miss Octavia Hill and others, have been doing good work, and work in which men might well be proud to follow their example. I will not attempt for a moment to minimise the value of women's influence, but the question before us is whether it will be to the public advantage that they should be qualified to be elected as County Councillors and Aldermen. I wish to point out to the House that when the Local Government Act was passing through Parliament it was distinctly understood that women would not be qualified to be elected. That Act was drawn upon the lines of the Municipal Corporations Act, by which a vote was given to women. During the 20 years that the Municipal Corporations Act has been in force not a single woman has been elected as a Town Councillor or as Alderman. Clearly, therefore, public opinion does not favour the idea that women should be qualified to be elected to the County Council, and the recent decision given by the Courts only gave the stamp of the law to what has been the common opinion and wish on the subject. The measure has been introduced, as the noble Earl has said, on behalf of certain ladies who have been elected to the London County Council, and though I have, on behalf of the Government, to ask your Lordships not to support this Bill, I should be very sorry to say a single word which would imply any want of courtesy or respect for those ladies. They no doubt were impelled by a strong sense of duty to take the course they did, but I do not think any hardship has been caused by the interpretation of the law to which I have referred, because it has merely laid down what everybody originally intended. Now, the noble Marquess and the noble Earl have spoken with regard to the duties which belonged to County Councillors, and which, in their opinion, might be very well carried out by women. There are a few special cases, no doubt, in which the advice and help of women would be useful, but I would point out, with regard to asylums and reformatory schools, that in the first place County Councils have matrons in those institutions, and if those matrons are not suitable or qualified to carry out the objects of the asylum or schools, they should be changed. Then also they could get advice by the aid of paid or unpaid women officers, or by the aid of lady visitors. There is not really so much difficulty in getting help in looking after asylums and schools on account of the want of women upon the County Councils as has been stated. Then, again, as women have votes for the County Councils, they can in the ordinary way exercise influence over their Representatives; and I can quite understand that on any Council on which the noble Lord the Earl of Meath served there would be plenty of kind sympathy towards those objects on which he has spent so much of his time and talent and for which he has done so much good. We must remember also that it is not sufficient to show that there are certain ladies who wish to belong to the County Councils, but we must consider whether there is any general desire on the part of women and the public that women should be upon those Councils. We have given them votes for the election of Representatives, but admitting that women are quite capable of making a good choice of Representatives, that by no means proves that the majority of them are fitted for or wish to be intrusted with the carrying out of administrative and executive functions. On the contrary, as I have stated, the fact that no woman has been elected upon the Borough Councils shows that there is no desire on the part of women generally to take over those public burdens which have been hitherto borne by men. If this Bill were passed it would be quite necessary that it should be extended, in order that women should sit upon Town Councils. In order to make a change of that kind we should require some very strong public reason. It is admitted that this is a sort of Relief or Endowment Bill for certain ladies, but that is surely hardly a strong enough ground to make a change which, as far as we can possibly tell, would not be well received by the public. Of course, one is always sorry to in any way appear ungracious or not to desire the presence of ladies, but I am sure if your Lordships refuse to receive this Bill, if you close this avenue of distinction to women, there are more congenial spheres of work where their quick intellects and kindly sympathies can be better exercised than by serving in the somewhat heated atmosphere of the County Councils. Therefore, my Lords, I beg to support the rejection of the Bill.

*THE EARL OF DERBY: My Lords, I never spoke or voted on this question before, and, therefore, before we go to a Division, I should like to say a few words. I shall support the Bill of the noble Earl; but I am bound to say that in so doing, although I accept his conclusions, I do not arrive at them precisely by the same process of reasoning. The noble Earl has said much as to the valuable services which women can render upon these County County. I am not disputing that; but that is not the ground I should go upon, for my own part. I am not sure that in the majority of cases women will be as fit representatives upon County Councils as men are. I think it would be a very exceptional case and a very exceptional qualification that would induce me to vote for a female candidate, but that is not the way I look at it. What I cannot see is why we are to put ourselves in the place of the electors, and why we are to take out of their hands the decision in a matter which primarily, and, indeed, in questions concerning local affairs, exclusively concern themselves. My noble Friend who spoke last said that public opinion had not favoured the election of women to the Borough Councils, but that seems to me to be an argument which cuts both ways. If public opinion does not favour the election of women, women will not be elected either for Borough Councils or for County Councils, and the danger you apprehend will not arise. If, on the other hand, the electors, knowing the persons, knowing what they want, think the female candidates are the fittest to be chosen, they are the persons concerned, and I do not see how it can be our business to say they shall not have the members whom they desire to vote for. We should, of course, be justified in objecting if it could be shown that there were any case of absolute and universal disqualification applicable to every female candidate, but I know nobody in this House will say that. If the electors choose badly, if they choose a person who is unfit or who will be an obstruction to business, they alone are responsible, and they alone will suffer. My Lords, I quite agree in what has been said as to the importance of the work done by the County Council, but the very fact that you have entrusted them with these great powers shows that Parliament has some confidence in their judgment and in their capacity; and it occurs to me rather contradictory to say that, although they are perfectly fit to decide upon matters of the gravest importance, yet, if it be a folly to elect women, they will, nevertheless, do so upon a great scale. My Lords, if that were so, I think it would show not that this particular measure is a mistake, but that they have been entrusted with powers for which they were not fit. My noble Friend behind me expressed a wish that women should be kept clear from the rough work of politics. I sympathise entirely with that feeling, but is it not rather late in the day to speak of that? You have women addressing public meetings; you have women—ladies of high rank—not unfrequently appearing on public platforms; and I must say that one of the best speeches I ever heard on that much disputed Irish question of which we hear so much was delivered by a woman. But nobody supposes that women generally will desire to serve upon these County Councils; and if they do not wish to do so, nobody will compel them. Those who are willing to put themselves forward are presumably those who find the duties congenial and who will not, therefore, object to undertake them. My Lords, I will not repeat what has been already said; but I think the argument of my noble Friend was absolutely conclusive when he spoke of the precedent which you have created by permitting women to be members of School Boards, and to sit as Guardians. How you can draw a distinction between the work of School Boards or Boards of Guardians and the work which will devolve upon the County Councils I cannot see. The question of the Parliamentary franchise is entirely a separate one, and it will be time enough to deal with it when it arises. At any rate, my Lords, do not let us refuse to do a thing which in itself is harmless and rational, because it may be used as an argument in pressing us to do something which we do not believe to be either one or the other.

The Earl of Derby

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I am anxious not to give the perfectly silent vote which I gave last year upon this question. I entirely agree with the noble Lord the Earl of Meath that this is not a Party question, and I merely offer my own opinion upon the subject. I thought it was to be lamented last year that upon his measure, which occupied public attention a good deal, and which was backed up on a division by, I think, two to one of a great Municipal Body interested in the question, your Lordships should have divided without one word having been said against the measure which has now been explained in so very satisfactory a way by the noble Earl. The result was a very large majority against it and a small minority for it; but I think that a very large majority is not very discouraging on a question of this sort. Very much younger Members than myself have had opportunities of seeing the enormous changes which have taken place in public opinion upon the question of the position and usefulness of women. When I was a boy, a great statesman, who has since become a very brilliant man of letters, took his daughter into Devonshire on a visit. On his return to London he received a letter from his hostess, enclosing a copy of verses, and suggesting that very likely the modesty of his daughter had prevented him seeing the copy which she then sent him. The statesman at once sent for his daughter and criticised the verses, pointing out some unsuitable lines, praising the beauties of others, and on the whole greatly approving of the poem. But, having done that, he then appealed to her affection for him, and made a request to her never to write verses again. He was not afraid of her becoming a good poetess, but he was afraid of the disadvantages which were likely to be suffered by her if she were supposed to be a lady of literary attainments. Since that time I think matters have greatly changed. The noble Earl who has just sat down and myself have been a good deal mixed up with the question of Female Education, and I think we can remember every argument which has been used to-night being put forward at every step, whether the question was the admission of women to the Universities, or their eligibility to medical degrees, or to degrees in Arts. What has been the result? The result is, that you have at this day, as has been so aptly said by Lord Meath, as compared with 50 years ago, the most universal expression of pleasure at the success of the daughter of another and more modern statesman, who has shown that even in the least sentimental and most reasoning branch of study women can be equal to, if not superior to, men. My Lords, I need not go over the ground as to the functions given to women since that time, the fact of their having been given votes in municipal affairs, or the fact of their increasing numbers as members of School Boards and Boards of Guardians. I believe it is the fact that within the last 10 or 15 years the increase has chiefly taken place on the Boards of Guardians. I have been told, and I am rather inclined to believe it, that in a great many cases, as Guardians, women have shown exceptional energy, tact, and sympathy; and I believe that has been exactly the experience also in the School Boards during the short time that the influence of women has been exercised upon them. Now, my Lords, it occurs to me that it is really a waste of power to refuse arbitrarily their assistance in such useful public work as is performed by the County Councils. Lord Meath has explained that many of these ladies have abundant leisure besides having the wish to make themselves useful. With regard to the Councillors in general, they represent the average candidates for the post; but with regard to the women, it should not be forgotten that they are nearly all a picked lot, and very superior in attainments to the majority of the men whom they meet. I think, my Lords, it is a real waste of power, when you have this fund of useful work for public purposes, that you should deprive yourselves of it. I entirely agree with the noble Earl that one of the principal items in this matter is the question of the constituencies and their liberty to choose whom they think will best represent them on these Councils. I quite agree that it would be tyrannous and cruel to force women even to exercise the votes they now have in electing County Councillors if they do not wish; but it seems to me it would be equally tyrannical to prevent the constituencies choosing these persons to represent them, and to prevent the women themselves who wish to be useful to their fellow-citizens from contributing their assistance to the performance of public duties. Of course, there are things to be said for and against, but one thing that strikes me very much is that I do not think I have heard one single word yet about its being a disadvantage to have women on the County Council. I may have missed it, but I do not think one word was said to that effect. The argument was, that if you give women seats on the County Council, you must give them seats in Parliament afterwards. Now, it appears to me that those who are so very much afraid of contaminating women by allowing them to do this sort of work, forget the part they already play. I am afraid that is a very dangerous admission, and I believe the noble Marquess has expressed himself on one occasion as not altogether unfavourable to some enlargement of the franchise to the other sex. When we are called upon to allow them to sit on County Councils, it is only logical to say that, as we have given the women votes for the County Council, we must give them the Parliamentary franchise. That is rather a dangerous argument, therefore, from the quarter whence it comes. I hold myself in these matters, if there is a doubt, it is always better to give the benefit of it to the side of freedom and liberty. I do not think there is any fear of the Government of this country being entrusted to women if this Bill passes, but I think it would be of immense advantage that they should be allowed to deal with those subjects with which they are so well qualified to deal. Some people talk about the danger of contaminating women by contact with politics, but I think it is a little too late to speak of that when we consider the work that is done by the ladies of the Primrose League, and at Conservative as well as Radical meetings, and too late to expect the women to keep themselves—to use a popular phrase—"to their proper sphere." In fact, I think it is hopeless; and I think it might be judicious if those who are afraid of too much political action on the part of women were to afford them the means of making themselves useful in administrative work where Party politics ought not to enter, and to give them that vent for any superabundant energy which they may have.

On Question, whether the word "now" stand part of the Motion, the House divided:—Contents 49; Not-Contents 119.

Resolved in the negative; Bill to be read 2ª this day six months.

THE SWEATING SYSTEM.

*THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN: My Lords, in calling the attention of the House to the Report of the Committee on the Sweating System, founded upon a certain voluminous mass of evidence, I will endeavour, to the best of my ability, to confine my remarks within reasonable limits; but I hope that your Lordships will understand that, in doing so, it will be impossible for me to enter as fully as I should wish to do into some of the points which it is my duty to raise. On the Motion which I have put down on the Paper—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, legislation with a view to the amelioration of the condition of the people suffering under that system is urgently needed,"

I propose to say very little. Your Lordships may not have read the evidence, probably few of you have, but you will have read the Report. The picture may not be painted in very brilliant colours, or with too vigorous a brush. That is a fault on the right side. It is vivid enough to give your Lordships a fairly adequate conception of the condition of the people who were the subject of the inquiry, and who were represented in the evidence taken before the Committee. The Report will bring to your notice the almost inhuman hours of work; the miserable pittance for which these people exchange their almost unremitting toil—the scanty fare, barely enough to keep starvation from the door; the horrible insanitary conditions in which they work, the overcrowding in their dwellings, men, women, and children, often not even members of the same family sleeping huddled up on the floor of the dilapidated room in which they live and work, and work and die; the children sick of infectious diseases, covered with half-finished clothing, destined to be distributed and to carry infection through all classes of society; the effect in increasing the national scourge consumption. All these things are set out plainly in the Report, and they make up a picture—a result of our 19th century civilisation and of our manufacturing age, which is certainly not a pleasant one to look upon, but which is sufficiently familiar to your Lordships. Your Lordships can form some appreciation of the misery—the hopeless misery, the wretchedness—the people's wretchedness of their lives; of the physical, mental, and moral degradation that surrounds them; and, therefore, I will not at all labour that point. I am sure every Member of this House will agree with me that it is advisable that measures should be taken, if possible, to ameliorate the condition of these people. I do not, however, propose to address myself to that. What I wish to address myself principally to rather, is the economic aspect of the question. Considerations more important than philanthropic sentiment are involved in this question. We have to form a correct opinion as to the extent, gravity, and causes of the evils proved to exist; to decide whether they are due to the faults and follies of the people, or to forces beyond their control; and to determine wisely as to what remedies should be tried. We are, in my opinion, my Lords, face to face with a very difficult problem, a problem of much greater importance even than the misery of these people, although that is intensely important, a very difficult problem, and one the difficulty of which is not, in my opinion, sufficiently stated in the Report of your Lordships' Committee. What I want the House to consider is whether the recommendations proposed by your Lordships' Committee are likely to be efficient; whether they will be sufficient to cope with the phenomena which were brought out in evidence; whether the conclusions of the Committee are sound and are formed upon the evidence; and, whether the Report presents a true miniature of the picture presented in evidence before the Committee. Now, my Lords, what is the general impression that the Report conveys? I should say that the general impression which the Report conveys is that great and crying evils exist; that considerable numbers of people are living lives of great hardship and misery; that the misery consists of very insanitary conditions, excessively low wages, and exceedingly long hours of work; that with the exception of sanitation the people themselves are mainly to blame for the circumstances of their lives, and that such matters as the abuse of sub-contracting, intense competition of capital, and the influx of a certain class of foreign labour, and other matters of that kind, have little or nothing to do with the sweating system. I should gather from the Report that, in the opinion of the Committee, sweating does exist, if by sweating you mean a condition of misery; but that a sweating system—that is, a system of manufacture which produces, or tends to produce, this misery—does not exist. That is a fair summary of the general view of the situation placed before your Lordships' House in the Report. With that summary I almost entirely disagree. I want your Lordships to concentrate your attention upon the question whether the conditions and methods of production and manufacture observed in what is known as the sweating system are natural and healthy; whether they are merely fulfilling in a natural way a natural demand; or whether, on the other hand, they are unnatural and unhealthy, and have merely given rise to an abnormal and unhealthy demand. That point is most important, because obviously the whole attitude of the Government, Parliament, or the country must depend upon the answer given to that question. If the whole conditions are natural, healthy, and beneficial to the community, then obviously there is nothing to be done except to deal with the sanitary aspect of the case, and to hope the people will abandon those habits which, according to the Committee, appear to be responsible largely for the sad conditions of their lives. If, on the other hand, what is called the sweating system indicates a diseased or unwholesome condition of manufacture, then obviously it is the duty of Parliament to address itself with a strong determination to find a remedy, not only for the insanitary conditions, but also for a condition of manufacture, which in itself is vicious, which inflicts great hardship upon the workers, which is detrimental to the industries themselves, and is of no benefit to the community. That is the view I take of the matter. It is on that general estimate that, as it now appears, I have the misfortune to differ from my late colleagues. Until I read the Report I had no idea in what lay the difference of opinion. The objections urged against the Chairman's draft were trivial. No charge of undervaluing or of suppressing evidence was brought against it, nor could it be; and it is only since comparing the draft with the Report, and noticing the passages excised in the former, that I perceive that certain deductions and conclusions are unpalatable to the Committee. I venture to assert that the conclusions of the draft are based upon a sounder foundation of evidence than those in the Report. As to the recommendations of the Report, I will presently point out to your Lordships in what respect I consider them inadequate. I will say at once that, so far as they go, I agree with them. They do not, in my opinion, go far enough; but, as far as they do go, I am in accord with the Committee. In fact, I read the Report of the Committee with some amusement and with feelings of considerable pleasurable surprise. The parental instinct is strong, and I must admit that I was glad to see again the features of my own child. It has suffered considerably, it is true, at the traditionally cruel hands of a stepmother. Its features are stained and even mutilated, and I regret to see that it uses in some cases very objectionable language, but still, after all, it is my own, and I was pleased to see its well-known features again in the Report of the Committee. The Report, my Lords, is a master-piece of the difficult art of adaptation, and I should like to express my compliments, if I only knew to whom those compliments are due. Your Lordships must remember that when the Committee unanimously refused to consider the Chairman's draft they with equal unanimity decided to accept for consideration the draft brought up in substitution by the noble Lord opposite (Lord Thring). That draft, when it was first circulated, consisted of about $2\frac{1}{4}$ pages, and I think 21 paragraphs. ... In a very short time, I think in about a fortnight, it had developed to 3 pages, and, I think, 33 paragraphs. Owing, doubtless, to the extreme minuteness of its proportions, that draft appears to have been lost sight of altogether, and to have disappeared. I find no trace of it, but, as a matter of fact, that was the draft which the Committee accepted for consideration. On to that, somebody—I know not who—has grafted the major part of the draft which I brought up to the Committee 10 months ago. I fear the Committee became somewhat demoralised by the nature of the evidence brought before them. They appear to have become bitten and saturated with the *virus* of the sweating system. In fact, the system of middlemen and sub-contractors is well illustrated by what has taken place with regard to the Report. The experienced middleman who was referred to before the Committee as making the maximum amount of profit with the least amount of labour, might be fairly represented by the noble Earl opposite (Lord Derby). The noble and learned Lord Lord Thring took out the original contract. He obtained the material—well, perhaps the least said about that the better—did a litttle "knifing" himself and then sub-let the contract to certain members of the Committee, who have been content to work under him, and to modestly blush unseen. At any rate, my Lords, I have to convey my compliments to the Committee, and I should like at the same time to express my gratification at the delicately-veiled flattery and great if subtle compliment which has been paid me of first refusing to consider my draft and then making such very generous use of it. I should now like to turn to the evidence. In ordinary cases by far the most important part of a Report are the recommendations; but this is rather an exceptional case. It is obvious that the summary of evidence is, in this case, of the first importance. The Report lays some stress upon the good effect that the inquiry has had on account of the exposure which took place before the Committee, and the good effect produced by public opinion. But all that will very rapidly tend to fade away. The effect of the exposure will very soon pass away, and the effect of public opinion in calling employers to a clearer sense of their duty will not stand long against the natural desire of money-getting. The evidence is so voluminous that it is out of the question to suppose many people will take the trouble to read it. This Report will be taken as an authoritative statement of the facts, and of the causes and consequences of sweating as set out in the evidence. Upon it public opinion will be formed and maintained; to it statesmen will look for guidance; and legislation will be founded upon it. I hold, therefore, it is most essential in this case that the Report should be an absolutely true and perfect miniature of the picture that was presented in evidence. I will prove to your Lordships that the Report is not as it ought to be, a true miniature of the picture presented in evidence. I will show that the sweating system is not merely a harmless development of manufacture. I will show that many of the conclusions of the Report in most important matters are not founded on the evidence, but are directly contrary to it. The witnesses were before the Committee. They could cross-examine them; they did cross-examine them, and failed to shake their testimony. The conclusions of the Report may be right; but, right or wrong, they are not founded on evidence. I will also demonstrate that the case in evidence is not fairly and impartially stated in the Report. I do not, of course, object to the Committee forming and expressing any opinion they think right; but I do object most strongly to the undue prominence given to evidence that bears out their views, and to the omission or relegation to obscurity of evidence that is opposed to them. The Committee are in error in saying that the use of machinery and the sub-division of work was considered to be a cause of sweating. Undoubtedly, it was put before us in evidence that minute sub-division of labour and the use of machinery have an injurious effect upon some of the operatives; but it is not correct to say that the working class witnesses before the Committee held that machinery and the sub-division of labour was the cause of sweating, and they wished for any interference whatever with the natural development of invention, or with the natural development of the processes of industry. To state that would be to give a false impression of the gist of the working class evidence upon that point. It is quite true, it was pointed out that the modern minute sub-division of work limited a man's usefulness. Obviously, if a man can work at only one minute branch of industry he is limited to that particular branch, and if the demand falls off in that branch he is unable to find employment of another kind elsewhere. That was mentioned, and it is certainly true; because it is a mere truism to say that a man's opportunity of making a living and of getting work is co-extensive with his knowledge. The more he knows, the better chance he has. But, my Lords, the only suggestion that was made upon that point—and the failure of apprenticeship was deplored in that respect — was that greater facilities should be given to the people by means of technical education, and that, in my opinion, I am bound to say, is a very sensible suggestion. But there were three matters, the abuse of sub-contracting, the competition among employers, and foreign immigration, which, undoubtedly, were mentioned in evidence as being causes of sweating; and not only causes but probably the chief causes of sweating. I will ask your Lordships to give attention to what I shall endeavour to say shortly on those three points. I have no intention of comparing the Chairman's draft with its somewhat mutilated remains; but if your Lordships were to read the two, the draft and the Report, you would find that a thread, as it were, has been drawn out of the draft, crumpling it up in some places, tearing it in others, and that that thread is composed of three strands—first, the abuse of sub-contracting; secondly, the competition among employers; and, thirdly, foreign immigration. There are several inaccuracies in the Report with which I will not trouble the House; but there is one which I must call your Lordships' attention to, because it is entirely pertinent to the matter of sub-contracting. The preliminary observations of the Report come at the end. That is a matter of taste, and it has the merit of originality. In paragraph 173 the Report states the nature of the inquiry to be as follows:—

> "The means employed to take advantage of the necessities of the poorer and more helpless class of workers; the conditions under which such workers live; the causes that have conduced to the state of things disclosed, and the remedies proposed."

The Report says that the inquiry embraced the means employed to take advantage of the necessities of the poorer and more helpless class of workers, and adds that that was the scope of the inquiry. My Lords, the scope of the inquiry was nothing of the kind. According to that the Committee would have had to inquire into every case where the people claimed to be helpless and miserable, and asserted that their helplessness and misery was taken advantage of. If that had been the character of the inquiry the only question for your Lordships' House would have been whether there was any hereditary obligation to sit on that Committee, because the inquiry could not possibly have been finished within the present generation. As a matter of fact, what the Committee did was this—they decided at a preliminary meeting to confine the inquiry to those cases in which sub-contracting, or the existence of middlemen, was claimed to be an important factor in the case. That was the decision which the Committee arrived at, and it was, in my judgment, a wise decision, because it kept the inquiry within reasonable limits. It was my duty, as Chairman, to sift and cull out the evidence that was presented to the Committee, and, acting on that decision, I rejected claim after claim, from industry after industry, and individual after individual, because I held that either there was no claim, or no sufficient claim, that sub-contracting or the existence of middlemen was the cause of sweating. I object to that part of the Report on three grounds—first, because it is not true; secondly, because it places me in the false position of having arbitrarily decided that such and such a trade or individual should not be allowed to give evidence before the Committee; and thirdly, I object to it mainly and principally because it gives a false colour and complexion to the whole of the inquiry. It forces the inquiry out of its natural channel. It states that we inquired into all cases where the necessities of the poor were taken advantage of, and it puts out of sight altogether the most important factor in the whole case—that is, the allegation, the claim, that the abuse of sub-contracting, and the existence of unnecessary middlemen, are the principal causes of the sweating system. Now, my Lords, what is the opinion of the Committee on the abuse of sub-contracting? The Report says that the middleman is the consequence, and not the cause, of sweating, and the Committee appear to treat that matter very lightly. Well, my Lords, the position of the Committee was, I think, somewhat illogical in that respect. The Report speaks of the sweating in the Government contracts as a very grave matter. The charge in regard to the Government contracts was purely that they were not fulfilled by the original contractors, but were sub-let. If that is a scandal in respect of Government work, it is equally so in respect of individual work; if it is immoral in the one case, it is immoral in the other. If it is not immoral—if it is wholesome and a proper means of cheapening production in the case of individuals and private firms, then I say you have no right to ask the State to interfere in the work of the nation. The Report states to the effect that some witnesses thought the abuse of sub-contracting constituted sweating; that others thought it had nothing to do with it; that some thought one way, and some the other. My Lords, that gives an absolutely and totally false impression to the House of the weight of evidence. That leaves your Lordships under the impression that the evidence was equally balanced; that some of the witnesses thought sub-contracting was the cause, and other witnesses thought it was not. Now, what are the facts with regard to the evidence upon that point? Out of a total number of 86 witnesses who spoke upon that question, 83 were of opinion that some or other of the evils they complained of were due to the existence of unnecessary middlemen and to sub-contracting. Mark, my Lords, 83 witnesses out of 86. Among those 83 witnesses were Mr. Holland, of Holland and Sons, Dr. Adler, the Chief Rabbi, the officials of the Jewish Board of Guardians, Mr. Burnett, the Labour Correspondent of the Board of Trade, the Bishop of Bedford, who was for ten and a half years Rector of Spitalfields, the Vicar of Old Ford, Mr. Redgrave, one of Her Majesty's Chief Inspectors, and I think, with one exception, every Factory Inspector examined before the Committee. Among them also was Mr. Nepean, the Director of the Army Contracts, and 22 Representatives of Trade Societies. All those witnesses testified that, in their opinion, subletting was a cause of sweating. On the other side were three witnesses, Miss Potter, Mr. Maple, and Mr. Davis, the Factory Inspector of Sheffield. And no mention is made of all this evidence on this important subject. I would ask your Lordships whether that is a fair way of stating the evidence? It is proved in the evidence that the midddleman exists where these evils abound. Almost every one of these witnesses who gave evidence before the Committee agreed that the evils complained of existed in trades and industries in which the system of sub-contracting existed, and claimed it to be the cause of them. My Lords, I do not think that to make no mention whatever of the fact that there is an overwhelming mass of evidence, of the greatest importance, given by witnesses of the greatest authority, and who attribute sweating to the abuse of sub-contracting, and the existence of the unnecessary middleman, merely saying that some of the witnesses were one way and some the other, and giving it as the opinion of the Committee that sub-contracting has practically nothing to do with the matter, is placing a fair construction upon the evidence. I think it is placing a false construction upon the evidence, that it gives your Lordships an entirely false impression of it, and is not placing the case fairly before your Lordships' House. The Committee are, of course, justified in saying what they like as to sub-contracting not being a cause of sweating; but they ought to state that the whole body of evidence is against them, and they are not justified in stating that the evils proved in evidence existed in trades where middlemen and sub-contracting did not exist. Now, my Lords, I will turn to my second point, and that is the effect of the excessive competition among employers and capitalists. What is the cause of this sub-contracting that I have spoken of? Why excessive competition among employers. This question of the competition of capitalists goes really, my Lords, to the very root of the matter, because upon it depends the answer to the question whether the sweating system is a natural development of manufacture, meeting a natural and normal demand, or whether it is the contrary. But, my Lords, this question of competition among employers is absolutely and utterly ignored in the Report. There is no mention made of it whatever. No reference is made to the evidence upon it; no quotation is given from the evidence; nothing at all—not one word. And yet it is a matter of the very first importance. The silence of the Committee upon this point would cause your Lordships to infer, and must inevitably cause your Lordships to infer, that the competition of employers has nothing whatever to do with the matter. Now, what does the evidence say upon that point? That is a matter which is so important that I will quote to the House what one or two of the witnesses say. Mr. Holland says—

> "To keep your places going wages must be lowered considerably, inferior goods must be supplied, and all this must be done owing to the competition among employers."

Mr. Akers, the foreman of Messrs Arthur and Company, a very large firm of clothiers in Leeds, says—

> "It is the competition in the trade that has caused the reduction in prices, not the competition to get work."

Mr. Holley, the late President of the Amalgamated Society of Tailors, a Society whose influence extends all over the United Kingdom, says—

> "It is difficult or impossible for the time log prices to be maintained owing to the competition of the sweaters."

Mr. Burnett, the Labour Correspondent of the Board of Trade, says—

> "Excessive competition, which is the root and cause of most of the evils complained of in the evidence originated in the competition among masters and employers."

Mr. Davis, the Factory Inspector of Sheffield, says—

> "The competition is very great both among the workmen, the little masters, and the large masters, and that really is the cause of the low wages, and so on."

My Lords, I have taken the trouble to analyse the evidence upon that point, and I find that in speaking of the effects of competition, 41 witnesses, including 15 wage-earners, 14 employers, and 12 independent witnesses, testify that competition among employers is the cause of sweating, and there is not one syllable mentioned in the Report of that fact. My Lords, I could multiply instances of that; but what I want to do is to impress upon you that witnesses of great weight and authority emphatically and at once put down their fingers upon competition, the competition of employers, as a primary cause of sweating, and that is entirely ignored in the Report of your Committee. The sequence of events is very simple, and is plainly enough proved in evidence. The intense competition among employers created a frantic desire for cheap production; that, in its turn, resulted in a tendency to employ unskilled instead of skilled labour, in the introduction of the cheapest and lowest kind of foreign labour, in scamped work and in the use of inferior material. The large employers will allow sweaters to do for them what they will not do for themselves. The intense competition among large firms favours sub-contracting, causes sub-contracting, for the simple and sufficient reason that the small man can produce more cheaply than the factory owner or shop owner, not because he can legitimately produce more cheaply, but because he is enabled to get an advantage by being able to evade the law or by being outside the law. The small master does break and evade the law; the large master cannot do so. That gives a premium to sweating, it gives a direct advantage to the sub contractor. Sub-contracting flourishes not, as the Report would lead your Lordships to believe, because it is a natural development of manufacture, but because it obtains an illegitimate and illegal advantage over the work that is carried on in the factory and the workshop. I want your Lordships clearly to understand that point, because it is most important. It indicates a distinctly diseased condition of manufacture, which calls urgently for a remedy, and for a remedy it points clearly and distinctly to one of two things, the factory owner and the workshop owner and the sweater must somehow or other be put on an equality. The sweater must not be allowed to have an advantage over the factory owner. Either we must repeal our Sanitary Laws, our Factory and Workshop Acts, and leave the whole thing open to competition, or we must apply the Factory and Workshop Acts to all the places where work is carried on, and so do away with the advantage which the small man and the sweater now enjoy. But, my Lords, does the consumer benefit in any way by this inferior cheap production? According to the evidence he does not benefit by it. The evidence is distinctly to the effect that the cheapness is merely apparent cheapness, merely cheapness in price, and that it has been attained at the sacrifice of quality. My Lords, I am quite aware that the deterioration was denied by a good many witnesses. The Report quotes the evidence of Mr. Giffen to show that there had been no deterioration in the boot trade, because his statistics proved that the trade had expanded. But I think I may point out that Mr. Giffen's figures apply to the whole trade, whereas the allegation of deterioration is only made against a certain portion of the boot trade, principally the slop trade with the colonies. I have no time to weigh and balance all the evidence for and against the allegation of deterioration; I will only say, and I know very well it cannot be denied, that the great mass and bulk of the evidence is to the effect that cheapness is accompanied by scamped work, by the use of inferior materials, and that there is great deterioration in quality in those trades, or portions of trades, in which sweating exists, and which were inquired into by your Lordships' Committee. Then, my Lords, I come to my third and last point, that is the question of immigration. Of course, my Lords, the excessive competition of capital could not have produced the awful results that we have seen proved in evidence if it could not act upon an overcrowded, unskilled labour market. The noble Earl upon the Cross Benches is perfectly right in his Amendment—the overcrowded condition of the labour market is at the root and foundation of the evil, and I hope I shall not only have his support upon that point, but in what I shall have to say about the overcrowded state of that market. The glut in that market causes the open competition value of unskilled labour to be very low; and workers are unable to overcome this natural result, and force wages up above the open competition market value by combination. For the glut and the effects of it the actual or potential results of foreign immigration are mainly responsible. So long as this destitute, cheap, foreign labour has free access to our shores the unskilled labour market is, for all intents and purposes, coterminous with the supply of that cheap labour all over the world. The mere fact that employers can, if they choose, bring over 200 or 300 destitute Russian, Roumanian, or Polish Jews at any time must tend to depress wages down to the low level of wages and standard of life which those destitute foreigners are able to subsist upon. The Report makes very light of this matter. It admits that certain trades have been affected, but it says that undue stress has been laid upon the injurious effect of foreign immigration, and then the Report goes on to preach to these people about their imprudence, the result of their early marriages, and their low standard of life. What is the use of talking to them of their low standard of life if you insist upon leaving them at the same time in competition with a class of foreign labour with a standard of life so low that the native born cannot exist under it? Is it not mere mockery to talk of their raising their standard of life? How are they to do it if they are subject to this competition? What is the use of talking about their early marriages, and the congested condition of the labour market, when you know very well that as long as this foreign immigration can flow in unchecked to fill up any gap, nothing that the people can do themselves, either by self-control or emigration or in any other way, can have any effect whatever in relieving the congestion or benefitting their condition? Mr. Tillett, the Secretary of the Dock Labourers' Union, mentioned a case where a party of 500 emigrants went out of Tilbury Docks, and at the same time 700 foreign labourers came in; and he added that he knew several cases where men had been contemplating emigration, but had given up the idea when they saw the foreign labourers coming to fill their places. In one case, the man had actually applied for his passage, but having received this information and learnt these facts, he would not go, saying, "I do not want to go out of my country as long as these other people are coming in; it is only making room for them." I commend that to your Lordships' consideration most earnestly, because it contains a vast deal of truth. As long as these men can and do come in so long will it be impossible for our native labourers to do anything which can have any effect upon their present miserable condition. My Lords, do you think it is a good thing that our native labour should be pitted against this class of destitute foreign labour? Do you think it is a desirable thing that it should be so? Do you think it is likely to improve the characteristics or the moral, mental, and physical development of our people? Do you think it is a good thing to encourage this struggle for existence, and survival of the fittest, when the fittest is the one who can subsist on the lowest possible diet, amidst the greatest possible amount of filth, and surrounded by the greatest possible amount of misery? My Lords, the Committee recommend combination. What is the use of recommending combination to these people? How are they effectually to combine? How are they to make an effective combination when at any time they may be flooded by this cheap, destitute, unorganised, foreign labour, which can break down any combination they can possibly make? There is no use blinking at facts, and the truth is that if you choose to allow British labour to be placed in competition with this kind of foreign labour, you must make up your minds that the British working man and working woman must and will be brought down to the level of subsistence and methods of life of the foreign labourer. It must be so; it cannot possibly be otherwise. On the other hand, if you desire that British labour in these trades should be put on something like a footing of decent existence, and especially if you desire that that should be brought about in the best of all possible ways, by self help among the people, and by mutual combination among themselves, then, my Lords, it is absolutely certain that some check, or, if necessary, a full stop should be placed upon the importation of this cheap, destitute, and unskilled foreign labour. That, my Lords, is my opinion; the Committee appear to hold the opposite opinion. Well, the Committee are, of course, perfectly entitled to hold any opinion they choose upon the subject. I do not object to that; but what I do object to, and most strenuously protest against, is the way in which the evidence upon this point has been treated. The Report mentions foreign immigration in connection with two trades only—the tailoring and the bootmaking trade. In the tailoring trade it mentions one witness only, Mr. Hollington, as being of opinion that foreign immigration had an injurious effect upon his trade; and against him it sets up Mr. Stephany, Mr. Alexander, and Miss Potter. In the boot trade it mentions five witnesses as holding that immigration is injurious, and it mentions, in the margin, six witnesses as holding the contrary opinion. My Lords, in a matter of such importance as this, I think I am not only justified, but that it is my duty, to examine and look into the character of the evidence which the Committee have put, as a set-off to the evidence as to the evil consequences of the foreign immigration. Their principal witnesses are Mr. Stephany, Mr. Alexander, and Miss Potter. Mr. Stephany and Mr. Alexander are the honorary and paid secretaries of the Jewish Board of Guardians—a most excellent institution—an institution conducted, on the whole, so admirably that it may serve as a model to similar institutions anywhere. But, my Lords, I think it is only right and just to remember that, practically, the whole of this foreign labour consists of Russian, Polish, and Roumanian Jews, and the officials of the Jewish Board of Guardians not unnaturally look upon them with a sympathetic and a favouring eye. As a matter of fact, Mr. Stephany and Mr. Alexander said very little upon this point. They quoted principally from the reports of the institution; they said scarcely anything of themselves. They admit they had no knowledge of the volume of this foreign labour, and they admit that they had no means of obtaining any knowledge of it; they said, in their opinion, it was not sufficiently large to have any great effect; but, at the same time, they stated that they did their best to check it by trying to prevent destitute foreigners coming over here, and by either sending those who did come over here home again, or by endeavouring to pass them on to the United States. Then Miss Potter's name is mentioned. Miss Potter has done admirable work in the East End and has had considerable experience there. It is stated in the Report that Miss Potter herself worked in the sweaters' houses in order to obtain practical experience. That is, no doubt, perfectly true; but what I wish your Lordships to note is that, according to her evidence, Miss Potter worked in only the superior branches of the clothing trade and in superior shops, and her practical experience was confined within the not very large limit of three weeks. I have no desire whatever to minimise the value of Miss Potter's evidence. It was very valuable. But I do say this: that it ought to have been balanced and weighed against the evidence of other people of greater experience in the trade, and that it does not merit the position of almost exclusive importance that is assigned to it in the Report. Now, my Lords, as to the bootmaking trade, the principal witness quoted. Mr. Craig was the salaried secretary of the Boot and Shoe Manufacturers' Association, and he admitted he had no practical knowledge of the trade himself. Of the witnesses referred to in the margin as supporting his views, Mr. Flatau, a very large manufacturer, admitted that it was difficult to say whether or not the trade was passing out of English hands into the hands of foreigners. Mr. Maddey, the foreman at Messrs. Salomon's, admitted, in cross-examination, that the foreigner does sometimes push the Englishman out of work. Mr. S. Moses said he did not employ foreign sweaters, because "there are a number of good workmen out of work that are glad to get into a respectable third or fourth-class shop, and they will take low wages for the sake of their families." Mr. Darnell did not give evidence upon the subject at all, but spoke upon the subject of competition of foreign-made goods—quite another thing. One witness only, Mr. Salomon, can be truthfully said to bear out the conclusion of the Committee, and that witness was directly contradicted by his own foreman. That, my Lords, is the kind of evidence—that is the kind of ricketty scaffolding upon which rests that part of the structure of this Report, which states that the fall in prices has nothing to do with this influx of foreign labour in regard to sweating. Then, there is an equally astonishing conclusion in paragraph 71, where the Committee say that they can form no opinion as to the course of wages in the lower branches of the boot trade. The Report states that in the higher branches the wages are as good as ever they were. There was evidence to that effect, and I believe it to be perfectly true; but that was only in respect of the very highest class ofbespoke goods—that is to say, the very best class of hand made boots that can possibly be made. But the Committee can form no opinion upon the point as to whether wages are going down in the lower branches of trade. They might, I think, at least have informed your Lordships that there is an overwhelming body of evidence which asserts that in the trade generally the higher branches are shrinking and shrinking, and the lower branches are expanding and expanding; that the general tendency is for wages to go down in those lower branches, and that this cutting down of wages is attributable largely to the increase of foreign immigrants. I should like your Lordships, if you will, to turn for one moment to paragraph 55 of the Report, because I want to give it to your Lordships as an example of the way in which the evidence upon this point is treated. The contention in this paragraph is that the introduction of the greeners in the boot trade has cut down wages, because the greeners do not know what price to ask for their work, and, in fact, do not ask any price for their work. Against the statement of Mr. Solomon the Committee adduce Miss Potter and Mr. Maddy. They drag Miss Potter into this question in reference to the bootmaking trade, in, I must say, a most unceremonious and unjustifiable manner. Miss Potter knows nothing, and never pretended to know anything, about bootmaking. It is true that the Report says she testified that the greeners in the tailoring trade soon learn better, and in a few months can earn as much as anyone. But that leaves your Lordships to infer that, because that occurs in the tailoring trade, it also occurs in the bootmaking

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trade. What right has the Committee to ask your Lordships to believe that there is a close analogy between these two trades, and to suppose that, because Miss Potter says so-and-so occurred in the tailoring trade, therefore, what Mr. Salomon said with regard to the boot-making trade, is incorrect? Besides that, the Report makes those two witnesses put forward statements, and puts words and opinions into their mouths which they never uttered or entertained. Miss Potter never said that in the tailoring trade greeners could earn as good wages as anyone else after three months, and Mr. Maddy never said a word in corroboration of such a statement. What Miss Potter did say was this—

> "The actual raw greener cannot be used in the tailoring trade, he must at least have done tailoring at home to be of any use. Then he comes into the workshop, and he serves for about three months, perhaps for a very small wage, and at the end of three months he can command as good a wage as anybody."

What Mr. Maddy said was that a greener might, not after three, but after 12 months, be able to earn as good wages as anyone else. My Lords, I do not think that such a loose and careless treatment of evidence as that will find favour in the eyes of your Lordships' House. Now, my Lords, what does the Report say as to the evidence on the other side? What kind of summary or *précis* is there of the evidence in favour of the contention that foreign immigration has a bad effect? It mentions the matter in a very few places indeed. This question of immigration came up before us only incidentally. There was a Committee of the other House, inquiring into that particular matter, and every witness who desired to give evidence upon that particular point I turned over to the Committee of the House of Commons, and he was not heard before the Committee of your Lordships' House. It came up incidentally only; but so important was it, so all-pervading was the effect of this foreign immigration, that it was constantly being alluded to by the witnesses. I have taken the trouble to analyse that evidence also, and I find that, out of 20 working-class witnesses who alluded to the subject, 17 were of opinion that their trade was injured by foreign immigration, and three of a contrary opinion. Of 14 employers, small employers who make use of this cheap foreign labour, nine believed that it was injurious to the trade, and five that it was not injurious; four out of those five being themselves Jews. Of 18 uninterested witnesses, entirely independent witnesses, not engaged in the trade at all; 14 spoke strongly of the bad effects of foreign immigration. Among those 14 were the Bishop of Bedford, Mr. Lakeman, Mr. Giffen, Mr. Burnett, the Labour Correspondent of the Board of Trade, and many others. Mr. Giffen, it is true, said that the effect of these people

> "Remaining for settlement in the United Kingdom would not apparently be very large compared with the whole number of people in this country."

Well, my Lords, that, of course, is absolutely true; but Mr. Giffen added—

> "It might no doubt be important with reference to particular localities and with reference to particular trades."

That was all that was claimed with regard to it. Mr. Henderson, the Superintending Inspector of Factories for Scotland and the North of England, said—and this, my Lords, is most important, and I ask your attention particularly to it. He said, with regard to foreign immigration—

> "It does not affect us in the North at all, only indirectly. The rate of wages paid in London for the manufacture of clothing no doubt practically regulated the rate of wages paid everywhere else in the country."

The fact that the rate of wages is borne down in London would bear down the rate of wages everywhere else in this country. Dr. Adler, the Chief Rabbi, while refusing to allow that foreign immigration was the cause of sweating generally, admitted that it might be the case in certain trades. Then, my Lords, on the other side, those who say it has no particular effect, are Miss Potter, whom I have already alluded to, Mr. Stephan, Mr. Alexander, and Mr. Cohen, all officials of Jewish Boards of Guardians. I ask your Lordships ought all that evidence to have been practically suppressed? Should no mention have been made whatever in the Report to this great mass, this great weight and body of evidence which was given in favour of the contention that the influx of this cheap, unskilled, destitute, foreign labour, has a very serious effect upon our British industries, and is one of the principal causes of sweating. The Report makes no recommendation on that subject. I do not find fault with it in the least for that; indeed, I have not myself thought it right to suggest any interference with this stream of foreign immigration, and for these reasons. In the first place, there is a great body of evidence before us which, while fully admitting the gravity of the evil, shows that the witnesses shrank from any interference whatever. But my principal reason was that, as I have said, a Committee of the other House was inquiring into this subject, and it had not made its Report when my draft was circulated. I thought, therefore, it would not be proper, under those circumstances, for any suggestions or interference to be made by your Lordships' Committee. But to abstain from suggesting direct interference by the State is a very different matter from stating that the effect of foreign immigration is much exaggerated, and omitting or suppressing all the evidence to the contrary. Now, my Lords, those are the three points which I wished to deal with. Those are the chief criticisms which I have felt it my duty to make upon this Report. I find the Report is faulty in respect of the effect of the abuse of sub-contracting; I find it is faulty in respect of the effect of excessive competition among employers; and I find it is faulty in the respect of the effect of foreign immigration. It is faulty, in fact, wherever capital is involved. In all those questions I have mentioned the conclusions of the Committee appear to me to be not only founded upon insufficient evidence, but to be directly opposed to the great weight and bulk of the evidence which was given before the Committee. My Lords, I set out with certain propositions to make good, and I hope I have succeeded in doing so. I hope I have succeeded in proving to your Lordships that there is a sweating system; that there is not only sweating, which is another term for misery, but a sweating system, a system of manufacturing which produces misery. I hope I have proved to your Lordships also that the sweating system is not merely a natural development of manufacture, a natural and wholesome means of meeting a natural and wholesome demand. I hope I have shown to your Lordships that sub-contracting, forced into unnatural exuberance by the excessive competition of employers, is one of the chief causes of sweating; and that that sub-contracting results from the excessive competition of capital acting upon an unskilled labour market which is too full—which is filled to repletion by the influx of foreign unskilled labour, or dominated and controlled absolutely by the fear of an influx of foreign labour. My Lords, I hope I have succeeded in proving those propositions, and I believe I have at least succeeded in demonstrating that the Report is not in line with the evidence; that it is not founded upon the evidence; and that in many most important particulars its conclusions are directly opposed to the evidence; that a great body of evidence is left entirely unnoticed; and that an enormous mass of evidence, including the opinions of witnesses of great authority, is entirely omitted, and is omitted in those cases, and in those instances, where it proved to the contrary the opinions formed by the Committee. My Lords, I will only say a word or two more as to the recommendations. The Report confines itself in its recommendations to sanitation. As far as that goes I am entirely in agreement. In my opinion, the recommendations as to sanitation are admirable, and if carried out would have a very good effect, and I sincerely hope that Her Majesty's Government will see their way to carry them out. But, my Lords, you are not going to cure this morbid, unwholesome condition of trade by the application of lime wash and paint; you must have more searching and more drastic legislation than that. You must ensure equality between the sweater and the legitimate manufacturer. That must be attained by some means. As workers are protected in a factory or in a workshop, they must be equally protected wherever work is carried on, and under whatever conditions the work is carried on. Those illegitimate advantages which the sweater enjoys must be taken away from him and the factory owner, and the workshop owner must not be allowed to work at a disadvantage. If the existing factory legislation could be applied to all places where work is carried on, if then this sub-contracting continued to exist, and the sweater continued to flourish, I should say there was a good *à priori* case for supposing that this sub-contracting, and this sweating middleman were a natural and normal development of industry. But, my Lords, if the law were applied and enforced everywhere, I am very certain that you would see the tendency would be for the work to gravitate to the large workshops and factories ; the tendency would be for the sweater to decay and die out. That, my Lords, is what I wish to see take place. I wish to see the State interfere effectually, but interfere onlywithin what I believe to be its legitimate sphere of action. I wish to see it interfere in the question of sanitation. I wish to see it interfere also in giving a wider application, and as far as possible a universal application, to the provisions of the Factory Acts, regulating the hours of labour for women, young persons, and children. Protected persons should be protected everywhere. If that were done, two of the evils which are complained of would be dealt with. The excessive hours would be prevented to a large extent, and the horrible insanitary conditions of labour would be cured, and you would have placed the people in a position, perhaps, to cure the third evil complained of—the utterly inadequate rate of wages. That, my Lords, is a matter that can only be dealt with by the people themselves ; but the State may do something to put them in a position to themselves deal with it. Whether the people can do so without some check being placed upon foreign immigration, without something being done which will enable us to deal with that immigration, I very greatly doubt. I believe that the question of foreign immigration will force itself upon the attention of Parliament. If a commencement had been made in dealing with the whole subject of sweating 10 or 15 years ago there would have been very little trouble in the matter now. The longer it is allowed to be unchecked the greater the difficulties that you will have to deal with will be. I hold it to be true statesmanship to anticipate a coming necessity, and I should like to see this question of foreign immigration dealt with before it is forced upon the attention of Government by popular clamour. My Lords, I see no way in which the law can be universally applied, or more widely applied, other than in the recommendations which I venture to make in paragraph 191, and the two succeeding paragraphs, of the draft which I had the honour to bring before the Committee. If these recommendations were adopted—and I do hope Her Majesty's Government will, at least, consider the advisability of doing so—of course a number of consequential Amendments in the Act of 1878 would become necessary. That Act, my Lords, is simply a miracle, a masterpiece of confusion. Nobody understands it. I venture to say that if you were to shut up the noble and learned Lord opposite (Lord Thring), and all Her Majesty's Inspectors in different rooms, and ask them to write down separately what they held to be the powers which are given under that Act, and who the people are who come within its jurisdiction, and who do not, no two of them would be able to agree. The Act requires amendment. What can be more absurd, for instance, than the provision in Clause 15 of that Act which allows women to work during a period of 15 hours, provided they are allowed four hours and a half for rest and refreshment ; and there being at the same time a provision in another clause, 61, which makes it absolutely impossible for an Inspector, or any number of Inspectors, to see that the women get their four hours and a half rest, or to ascertain whether they are not compelled to work 15 hours out of the 24. Sections 77 and 78 are also sections which are liable to great abuse, and I would draw attention to them. The matter of overtime, too, requires careful consideration. Overtime was granted in order to meet sudden demands, but there was a great deal of evidence given in proof of the allegation that the privileges of overtime are abused, that practically the full time allowance is worked on consecutive days, that is to say, the overtime allowed is worked out in about two months, and produces a period of brisk trade, that period of brisk trade being followed by a period of comparatively slack trade. I think, therefore, that the question of overtime is very important, and deserves very careful consideration. Then, my Lords, the term "workshop" requires to be more clearly defined, and if the word "family" continues to be used in the Act, that also requires to be more carefully defined. At present what may be included in the word "family" is very vague, and I suppose in Scotland it might be made to comprehend almost the whole country side. Then, I think, a minimum penalty ought to be imposed for all breaches of the Act. Those are the alterations and Amendments which I would venture to press upon the attention of Her Majesty's Government. The number of Inspectors also requires to be increased. It came out very strongly in evidence, and very greatly, I think, to the credit of Her Majesty's Inspectors, how very strong a sense of duty they evidently entertain, and what great exertions they make to fulfil that duty, but their numbers are utterly inadequate and must be largely, supplemented. They ought also, in certain cases, to be assisted by men who have practical experience of the various trades, and who have at their fingers' ends all the dodges which are practised in the trades. My Lords, that is practically all I have to say to your Lordships. I think it is a pity that all mention of the dock labourers was omitted in the Report. It is impossible to say that a *prècis* of the very voluminous evidence which was given upon that subject would not be of great value. I think it is a great pity that there is no reference to the tailoring trade in the West End of London; and I should personally be glad if some Member of the Committee would explain what they mean by the opinions, sentiments, and statement of facts attributed to the Bishop of Bedford in paragraph 44 of the Report. My Lords, before I sit down I should like, though it may be unusual, to express upon my own part, at any rate, my thanks to some of the witnesses and others who were of the greatest assistance in the inquiry. As your Lordships may well imagine, considering the character of the witnesses that we wanted to bring before the Committee, the inquiry was, at its inception, exceedingly difficult to set in motion. Mr. Arnold White, at the request of the Committee, gave us very valuable assistance at the outset in setting the inquiry going. It is true that in a very short time the inquiry gained a momentum that was exceedingly difficult to check, but at the beginning it was exceedingly difficult to set in motion, and I think Mr. Arnold White deserves the thanks of the Committee and your Lordships for the assistance he gave. A great many of the witnesses before us who were not in the least interested on one side or the other, came long distances, at great inconvenience, and at the sacrifice of much valuable time, to give information and assistance to the Committee. I should like also to say that we derived the greatest assistance from Mr. Oram, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors, who assisted us in the very difficult task of obtaining reliable witnesses from the Provinces. My Lords, the task which I have set myself has not been a very agreeable one. It is not very pleasant to have to make criticisms in a case of this kind, but feeling, as I do, very strongly that the case which was presented in evidence before the Committee is not clearly, fairly, justly, and impartially placed before the House in the Report, feeling, as I do also, that although improved sanitation will do something if the recommendations of the Committee are carried out, things will remain very much as they were before, and believing, as I do, that if that is the case, the consequences will be serious, I think I should have been very much lacking in a sense of duty if I had not endeavoured to the best of my ability, to lay before the House what I believe to be the truth.

Moved to resolve—

"That, in the opinion of this House, legislation with a view to the amelioration of the condition of the people suffering under the sweating system is urgently needed."—(The Lord Kenry, *E. Dunraven.*)

*THE EARL OF DERBY: My Lords, the speech of the noble Earl has ranged unavoidably over so great a variety of subjects that I am afraid it may not be as easy as I could wish to answer it in a connected and consecutive manner. The noble Earl says he has performed a disagreeable duty in criticising the Report of his Colleagues upon the Committee. For my own part I am quite willing to accept any criticism which is fair and well founded, and I have this consolation that if the noble Earl has found considerable fault with what we have said and done, or rather with what we have not said or done, his criticism was confined to assertion only, and he did not think it necessary to follow it up by proof. The noble Earl said, and it is almost the only charge he made which is definite enough for me to take hold of, that in every case where capital was concerned the Report showed a prejudice in favour of capital and against labour. He did not put it in those words, and I should be sorry to misquote him, but I think that was the effect of the statement he made. I will leave it to your Lordships to consider what are the probabilities of the case in that respect. Who are the capitalists with whom the Committee have been dealing? They are the men called sweaters—not rich men or employers on a great scale, but for the most part small men, very often working for themselves, driven very hard by competition, and, therefore, driven to press very hardly on those whom they employ. There are subcontractors with whom I do not suppose it is alleged we are likely to have any particular sympathy here; and there are foreign immigrants who come in and compete with our native labour. I think it would be very difficult for the noble Earl or anybody else to show there was an animus in the minds of anyone upon an inquiry of this kind in favour of any of those classes. Then the noble Earl has gone to another charge, also one of a very vague character. He says the Report is not founded upon the evidence, and that some part of the evidence has been left unnoticed by it. Well, my Lords, that some part of the evidence has been left unnoticed is undoubtedly the truth, because if we were to compress the Report within such limits as that anybody would be likely to read it we could not have made a complete abstract of those 2,000 to 3,000 pages of evidence which probably not many of your Lordships have looked at, and which probably very few of your Lordships have read. Then it is said that some particular cases have been left unnoticed. The noble Earl explained that he meant by that to refer specially to the dock labourers. Well, we left out advisedly any mention of the evidence that had been brought before us with regard to the dock labourers, and we did so for this reason, that the state of things had entirely changed between the time when the evidence was taken and the time at which the Report came out. That great strike had occurred which is in everybody's recollection, and to have referred to the state of things which existed in 1888, before the time of the strike, would have been simply time and trouble thrown away. Then, when the noble Earl says the Report is against the evidence, he knows perfectly well, and your Lordships must know, that where a great mass of evidence is taken and it is very contradictory nothing is easier than to say "Your Report does not follow the evidence." That is a charge which can very easily be made, and which is very difficult to disprove; but, unless it is accompanied by some proof, I do not think it requires much consideration. Then I pass over what was said by the noble Earl about our having borrowed from his Report. I have not the smallest objection to acknowledge that fact. I have always thought, and I believe my colleagues upon this Committee thought, that the Report of the noble Earl was very valuable, that it contained a great deal of valuable matter, and I do not think we could have shown our opinion better than by embodying it in part of our Report in connection with the evidence to which it refers, though in a somewhat different form from that which he adopted. Then I come to the definite question which the noble Earl has raised, and as to which he finds fault with what we have said, and with what we have recommended or have not recommended. My Lords, in the first place we took the question which he raises of competition among employers. He says a great deal of distress, arising from what is called sweating, is caused by an excessive competition among employers; and he further goes on to say that that is ignored or insufficiently mentioned in the Report. Well, my Lords, it is only ignored in this sense, that the effect of the very keen competition among the East End employers did not require to be mentioned and emphasised, because everybody is well aware of it. It cannot be unknown, and it certainly did not require to be more emphatically stated. But I do not understand quite what the noble Earl proposes as a remedy for this undue competition among employers. I listened to him with the greatest interest, and I thought some recommendation was coming; but, although he mentions this as an unsatisfactory state of things, he does not in the least suggest anything that can be done either to prevent or lessen it. I think that the doctrine which he lays down is not one which your Lordships or the public are likely to accept, when he tells you that it is the excessive competition amongst employers that is the cause of low wages. I should have thought every child would know that excessive competition among employers would operate, as far as it operates at all, to raise wages, and not to lower them. Then, my Lords, the noble Earl speaks of the illegitimate and illegal advantages gained by the sweater. He tells us that the sweater gains his advantage by breaking the law. I wish the noble Earl had explained what are the illegal advantages gained by the sweater, and what is the law that he breaks. He did not mention that.

*THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN: If the noble Lord will pardon me, I said that the sweater had advantages in respect of either being outside the law and consequently not being affected by it, or of being able to break and evade factory legislation that cannot be broken or evaded by the owners of factories and workshops.

*THE EARL OF DERBY: I thought the noble Earl spoke of the sweaters actually breaking the law, and not merely of their advantages in evading the law. But if that means that the Factories and Workshops Acts are to be applied to all labour performed by people in their own houses, that raises a question to which I will advert presently. I would point out that the illegal advantage which is referred to seems to imply that the person called the sweater actually breaks some existing law. Now, if that is so he can be dealt with without any change in the law, and I presume that the additional inspection, which we quite agree with the noble Lord in recommending, would meet the requirements of the case. But when the noble Earl goes on to say he wants to put the sweater, the worker, and the employer on an equality, I think he is suggesting that Parliament should do that which is utterly beyond the power of any legislation whatever to perform. Unless you are prepared to say that no work is to be taken home by workers or done in their own houses, and that all work is to be done in registered factories and workshops, there will be undoubtedly a greater freedom from restraint on the part of those who work in their own houses than there is elsewhere. I do not think the noble Earl can really contemplate such an alteration of the law as this, that a woman, for instance, is not to be allowed to take a piece of work home, and so contribute to her own and her husband's earnings, because by so doing she would commit a breach of the Factories and Workshops Acts. I do not think that is intended, and if that is not intended I do not see what it is that the noble Earl means. I am not prepared to deny that there is an excessive desire for cheap articles, and a very keen competition among employers, but if the noble Earl or anyone else will tell us how that competition is to be dealt with by Parliamentary action he will be able to do what nobody has been able to do before. Then, as to the case of sub-contractors, the noble Earl says that we have entirely put out of sight and ignored the abuse of sub-contracting and the number of unnecessary middlemen. He tells us that 83 witnesses spoke of the existence of unnecessary middlemen as being the cause of the evil. Now, as to our having ignored the subject, I would refer to paragraph 181 of the Report, in which we say that the employers are to blame if they leave to the sub-contractor the duty of selecting the workers exclusively. This is what we say—

> "But it seems to us that the middleman is the consequence, not the cause of the evil; the instrument not the hand which gives motion to the instrument, which does the mischief. Moreover, the middleman is found to be absent in many cases in which the evils complained of abound."

My Lords, that is a very simple and dispassionate statement, but I believe it represents the literal fact. I do not believe that the unnecessary middleman is the cause of low wages. I do not pretend to explain the cause or the manner in which the number of middlemen has become so great, but I should think it must be obvious to anyone who considers the matter, that if it is the employer's object to pay as little as he can, and if it is naturally the object of the worker to receive as much as he can, they have both a strong and identical interest in getting rid of the middleman who is interposed between them, and who takes a share of the profits of both. Presumably, therefore, the middleman exists because he is found in some way necessary, or, at least, useful. But, my Lords, when the noble Earl objects to the number of unnecessary middlemen, and to the abuse of sub-contracting, I observed that he very wisely stopped short of suggesting any means by which the practice to which he objects can be put an end to. He does not suggest that sub-contracting should be forbidden. I do not go into that question, because he has not raised it, but I think it would be easy to show that the prohibition of sub-contracting would be utterly ineffective, besides being in many cases extremely unfair. If you cannot put an end to the system, and if it has grown up in the ordinary course of trade, I think there is no use in denouncing that which after all is not, as we believe, a cause, but is a symptom of an unhealthy state of things. My Lords, I now come to the more important question which the noble Earl has raised, I mean that of foreign immigration, and the overcrowded state of the labour market. The noble Earl finds fault with us for minimising that grievance. He says that we make too little of it, and he refers to the Committee of the House of Commons, which reported very fully upon the subject. Now, my Lords, it is quite true that we did not go fully, or in detail, into this question of foreign immigration, and we did not do so for three reasons. In the first place, we were aware that that Committee of the House of Commons was sitting; in fact, it reported before we did, and we did not think it desirable to go again over the ground which had been thoroughly traversed by those who were dealing with the subject in the other House. The noble Earl himself referred to the fact of that Committee sitting, and admitted that it was a reason why we should not deal at length with that part of the subject. In the next place, the subject is an extremely important one, no doubt, but it is a very large one, and it only in a slight degree concerns the subject of our inquiry. No doubt foreign immigration does affect the labour market; so, no doubt, does almost anything and everything that bears upon the habits and life of the working classes; but the question of foreign immigration has many other aspects besides that which we have to look at. It would have been quite impossible for us to go fully into it, or to make a recommendation upon that subject, without taking into consideration a very large number of questions which were not within our order of reference, and which were not, in fact, in any way before us. For instance, there was the question whether, if we were to put checks upon the immigration of working men from foreign countries those countries might not retaliate, and object to our working men being employed there; and, if so, it is not at all certain that we should have the best of that bargain. Then, again, it is admitted by all the witnesses that these foreign workers who are so much complained of do not come upon the rates. They do not live upon charity, they maintain themselves, they are not paupers; and the objection taken to them is not that they are helpless, or idle, or incapable of getting their living, but that they are too industrious and too frugal, and therefore dangerous competitors for our own people to encounter. I think Parliament will pause before it says that on such grounds as these working men from other countries are to be excluded from this country. And let me point out here that that question involves the much larger one of protection to native labour; because if Parliament ought to interfere to prevent the cheap foreign workman coming into this country and working here, it would obviously follow that that cheap article which he produces abroad is equally to be objected to. Therefore, the question raised is no less than this, whether we are to revert to the principle of protecting native labour by putting exceptional taxes upon articles imported from abroad. But, my Lords, I do not know that I need labour this point, because, in point of fact, the noble Earl has himself given up the case. He says we ought to have laid much more stress upon this matter, and I expected to hear him say, but he stopped short of that, that we ought to have recommended Parliament to put restrictions on foreign labour. But when I look at his own

Report, paragraph 180, I find these words—

> "On the evidence before us we do not feel justified in suggesting any legislative interference with immigration."

If the noble Earl thought that there should be no legislative interference with immigration, which is exactly the view we take, I do not see what advantage there would have been in our calling attention at greater length to the subject. My Lords, I am bound to mention, though in saying this I am only stating my personal opinion, that it came out in the evidence taken before us, and before the other Committee, that the effect of this foreign immigration is very much less than it is popularly supposed to be. We all know that the real difficulty—the real danger—is the rate at which the poorest class are increasing in London and in our great towns. Compared with that natural increase, which it is not suggested we can check, the very slight addition which is made by foreign emigration is practically without appreciable effect. Well, my Lords, I have touched on the three points to which the noble Earl referred. What he objected to, as I understood, was that though we had dealt with the sanitary part of the question we had not dealt with the economical part of it. Now, it is quite true, and I quite agree with him, that what we call sweating means two things: it means work done under unsanitary conditions, and it means work done at very low and inadequate wages. We have dealt with the first point to the best of our judgment, and the various recommendations we have made will be better discussed in detail, when, as I hope may be the case, the Government brings in a Bill upon the subject. But with regard to the economical part of the question, I am bound to say that I think we should only be deluding the public if we held out any hope that the evil of inadequate wages could be directly dealt with by legislation. It is hardly necessary, I think, to prove what everybody is agreed upon; but surely it is obvious that if a man, driven by necessity, is willing to take 1s. a day, it would be utterly impossible to say he should not be allowed to work for less than 2s. In the first place, you could not enforce such a law if it were passed, because both parties would be equally interested in breaking it, and nobody else would be concerned in the matter. In the next place, if such a law could be passed and enforced, the only result would be that the man who gets low wages—inadequately low wages if you please—would get no wages at all. When things are in the state in which they are unhappily at the East End of London, there are only two ways in which the remedy can be applied. Labour is in excess of the demand, and therefore it is exceedingly cheap. What you have to do, if you can, is either to increase the demand on the one hand or to lessen the supply on the other. I do not know how or by what process legislation can increase the demand for labour. Nothing except relief works or public works of some kind would do it; and even if that extreme remedy were adopted, the only effect after a short time would be that you would have drawn a larger number of workmen to share in the expenditure going on. Then as to the diminution of the supply of labour. I am afraid that no direct remedy by legislation is possible. It may seem a hard thing to say, but it is better to look at things as they are. Indirectly, we may hope that a higher standard of civilisation, the increase of education, the diminution of those exceedingly early marriages, and in some degree emigration, may act as a palliative and remedy; but that there can be within any short period of time a radical cure is, to my mind, beyond hope. But we do not think that because you cannot effect a radical cure that is any reason why you should not endeavour to apply such palliatives as you can. That is what we intended to do in dealing with the sanitary part of the question; and if anybody thinks that the Committee ought to have dealt with the economical part of the question also, and that they should have devised or suggested means by which these unfortunate underpaid workmen should be more regularly employed, let him bring forward his scheme, and let us see whether any working result can be produced from it. The noble Earl has none, and I do not believe any can be found. I only ask your Lordships to believe that in going through this vast and complicated subject we have endeavoured to deal as fairly as we could with the evidence. I have not seen a trace of any prejudice or feeling on one side or the other in the course of this Inquiry. I believe the object of every member of the Committee was only to get at the facts; and though the zeal of the noble Earl may have led him to feel some disappointment in that we have not gone as far as he is disposed to go, yet, if he looks at what we have recommended, and remembers that he himself has abstained from making any precise recommendation in reference to the matters on which he has laid stress here, I think he will see that the difference between us is not as wide as to him appeared when he retired from the Committee. My Lords, I feel that I have very inadequately defended my colleagues who acted upon this Inquiry; but, of course, I was not aware, and could not be aware, what the particular points would be upon which the noble Earl would touch. However, if any further occasion should arise, I am happy to think that there are other Members of the Committee who will be able to do justice to the subject.

Moved, that the further debate be adjourned till To-morrow, and be taken first.—(The Lord Wemyss, *E. Wemyss*); agreed to, and ordered accordingly.

SUCK RIVER DRAINAGE (PROVISION OF FUNDS) BILL.—(No. 92.)

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.

Report from, That the Committee have added the Lord Bishop of Ripon to the Standing Committee for General Bills for the consideration of the Custody of Children Bill and the Protection of Children Bill.

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

House adjourned at ten minutes before Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 9th June, 1890.

QUESTIONS.

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if his attention has been called to the agricultural statistics published in the *Times* of 10th January, 1890, showing the decline in the cultivation of wheat, and also in the numbers of live stock in the United Kingdom between 1869 and 1889; to what cause such decline is attributable; if it has taken place in Germany, France, Russia, America, or any foreign country; and if it is proposed to take any steps in the matter?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): My attention has been called to the statistics published in the *Times* of January 10th, 1890. They appear to have been taken from the Agricultural Returns, and, with some minor exceptions, are in the main correct. The Returns do show a very serious decline in the area devoted to the cultivation of wheat since 1869, to the extent of 1,437,000 acres. With regard to the number of live stock, sheep have declined 14 per cent., but cattle, on the other hand, have increased 13 per cent., and pigs, 29 per cent., the increase in the two latter classes exceeding in importance the decrease in the number of sheep, which I believe to be due, among other causes, to the losses which were suffered from liver-fluke in the three years following 1879, and which have never yet been recovered. The decline in wheat is due to the heavy fall which has occurred in the price of that commodity. What the fall in price is due to is a matter of opinion. Some people, I believe, attribute it entirely to foreign competition and to greatly increased facilities of transport and production; others, again, to causes connected with the currency. I believe myself that the fall in the price of wheat may be attributed in part to both of these causes, though in what proportion it is, I apprehend, impossible to say. There does not appear to have been any decline in Germany, France, or Russia, while in America, up till recently, there has been a great increase. I am not aware of any steps which it is in my power to take to encourage a larger production of wheat in this country.

HOME FOOD SUPPLY.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if any calculation has been officially made by his Department of the period of time over which the quantity of wheat and flour usually in the United Kingdom would suffice for the food of the people at the existing rate of consumption, in case foreign supplies were stopped by war, blight, or other causes; and if any reserve of grain has been formed by the State for use in such eventuality?

Mr. CHAPLIN: No official estimate of the nature referred to has been prepared by the Board of Agriculture, or, as far as I know, by any other Department of the Government. The quantity of wheat and flour in the United Kingdom at any given date varies considerably, according to the period of the year. After harvest the supply is, of course, considerable; at the present time it is probably much less. It has been estimated by persons engaged in the corn trade that a consumption of 480,000 qrs. per week is required at the present time. Possibly seven times this amount may be in stock or undelivered. To this must be added the grain now in passage to the United Kingdom. The calculation of these several amounts is to a great extent, of course, a matter of conjecture. No reserve has been formed by the State.

ENGLISH REPRESENTATIVE AT THE VATICAN.

Mr. ATKINSON (Boston): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any appointment or authorisation has been made of a representative of this country at the Vatican; and what is the nature of the agreement made with the Pope respecting mixed marriages at Malta?

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. Fergusson, Manchester, N.E.): 1. No such appointment or authorisation has been made since the termination of Sir Lintorn Simmon's Special Mission. 2. The Agreement has been laid upon the Table very recently, and I have also explained it in detail.

THE INDIAN POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that, in spite of the instructions of the Secretary of State for India in 1879, to the effect that no one except a native of India should be appointed to posts in any branch of the Administration in India of Rs. 200 and upwards, except so far as the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay are concerned, on reference to himself and with his sanction, and that of the Viceroy from other parts of India, there are in the Post Office Department a large number of Europeans occupying posts designated for natives of India; whether his sanction was given, or that of the Viceroy, in each instance, to the several appointments; and whether he will state why natives of India were not appointed to these offices, seeing that identical positions in every presidency and province are filled by natives of India?

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Sir J. Gorst, Chatham): The Secretary of State has had no explanation on this subject, but inquiry is being made.

THE CANTONMENTS ACT (INDIA), 1889.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Government will lay upon the Table, and cause to be distributed, copies of "The Cantonments Act (India), 1889," and of any Rules which have been or are proposed to be made under Section 26, Clause 21, and Section 27, Sub-sections 2 and 4 of the said Act?

*Sir J. GORST: The Act and the Rules are both in the Library of the House, but if the hon. Member cares to move for copies of them, such copies can be laid on the Table as an unopposed Return.

THE INDIAN FORESTS DEPARTMENT.

Sir RICHARD TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham): I beg to ask the Under, Secretary of State for India what consideration practically is being given to the recent request by the Officers of the Indian Forests Department for the assimilation of their Leave and Pension Rules with those of the Public Works Department?

*SIR J. GORST: This is a matter which was under discussion by the Secretary of State and the Government of India, when the consent of the Governwas given to the proposed Committee on the grievances of the uncovenanted servants of India. The Secretary of State can take no further step till the House of Commons has determined whether the Committee shall be appointed.

KASHMIR.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India when the Papers relating to Kashmir, stated on the 18th of February to have been recently received from India, and early publication of which was then furnished, will be presented to the House; and whether the Secretary of State will state what condition he wishes to insure in Kashmir before he gives the Maharajah the opportunity of governing his State "in a way which will be a benefit to his subjects and to neighbouring countries as well," which it was stated the Government of India would be prepared to facilitate?

*SIR J. GORST: The Papers relating to Kashmir are now before my noble Friend the Secretary of State, and will be immediately presented to the House—I have little doubt before the expiration of the week. The hon. Member asks me what condition the Secretary of State wishes to insure in Kashmir before he gives the Maharajah the opportunity of governing his State in a way to benefit his subjects and neighbouring countries. The condition which the Secretary of State wishes to insure in Kashmir is one of just and upright government in the interest of the people of the State.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the majority of people of Kaskmir are of opinion that the only way to secure the state of things which the Secretary of State desires is the restoration of their lawful ruler and the withdrawal of all improper interference?

SIR J. GORST: No, Sir, there is no reason to suppose that the majority of the people of Kashmir entertain any such opinion.

THE BENGAL MEDICAL SERVICE.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether he is now in a position to answer the question as to the circumstances under which Kali Krishna Bágchi and two other surgeons on the Bengal Establishment have been dismissed from the Service; whether it is the fact that, in accordance with the rule governing the promotion of assistant surgeons, Kali Krishna Bágchi, after 14 years most satisfactory service, applied for examination at the septennial examination in Calcutta in May last, and two other assistant surgeons, after a lesser term of service, applied for the like examination; that such examination took place, and all were declared to have satisfied the examiners; that the Inspector General of Hospitals addressed questions to the Principal of the Medical College, and received assurances that every safeguard against foul play had been taken, and the examination conducted under adequate supervision; that, nevertheless, the Inspector General called upon Kali Krishna Bágchi and two others to undergo a supplementary examination prepared by himself; whether this course was in direct contradiction to the Regulations affecting medical examinations in India, the Examining Board alone having power to examine medical officers; whether Kali Krishna Bágchi and two others, having, on the ground that the proceedings were an imputation on their honour, and contrary to the Regulations, refused to submit themselves to the supplementary examination, were summarily dismissed for wilful disobedience of orders; whether the head of a Department can thus summarily dismiss officers against whom no charges of misconduct are made or inquired into, in view of the fact that the Rules of the Government Service in India state that Indian

> "Subordinates are not to be dismissed merely in consequence of unfavourable opinions entertained towards them by their superiors, or for slight reasons, but on proof only of tangible delinquency in such matters as fraud and dishonesty, continued and wilful negligence, and all offences involving disgrace";

and whether he will give instructions that the order for the dismissal of these officers shall be cancelled, and will direct an inquiry to be instituted into the whole circumstances, in which full opportunity will be given to the officers concerned to answer any charges which may have been brought against them?

SIR J. GORST: The answer to the first question is in the affirmative. The answer to the second is in the negative. The facts are not correctly stated in the question. The examination was a compulsory one, failure to pass which involved dismissal. The three assistant surgeons were never declared officially to have satisfied the examiner. The Inspector General, whose duty it was to decide whether they had passed or not, was not satisfied with their answers, and ordered them to answer further questions. This was not inconsistent with any existing Regulations. The assistant surgeons having, after explanations and warnings, persisted in disobeying the orders of the Inspector General were suspended from office in the first instance, and their dismissal was finally confirmed by the Government of India, to whom the matter was referred by the Government of Bengal. The Secretary of State sees no reason to interfere.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Have the regulations set out in the Circular Memorandum of the 15th of September been brought to the notice of the Secretary of State?

SIR J. GORST: I think that is the date of the Circular, but I am not prepared to pledge myself to anything with regard to it without notice.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I will again draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the matter.

THE EASTERN TELEGRAPH COMPANIES.

MR. SUMMERS (Huddersfield): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, with a view of improving and cheapening communication between the different parts of the British Empire, the Government will consider the advisability of buying the cables of the Eastern Telegraph Companies, or of laying new cables to compete with those already in existence?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I have been asked by my right hon. Friend to reply to this question. Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to enter upon the wide question, involving as it would international negotiations, of buying up the cables of the Eastern Telegraph Companies, nor is it certain that their acquisition by the Government would lead to the desired results. But the Government would be glad if the labours of the International Telegraph Conference now sitting at Paris should have some result in the direction indicated in the question of the hon. Member.

ENGINEER OFFICERS.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he is aware that at the recent examination of candidates for Engineer officers, a candidate who was informed that he had failed by 100 marks short of the minimum has since been accepted; and whether he will state if this acceptance arises from an insufficiency of qualified men amongst the competitors, or from what other cause?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The standard fixed at the examination this year was higher than that of last year. As the number who passed the higher standard was insufficient, six of the candidates who came up to last year's standard were entered in addition.

THE POSTMEN'S TRADE UNION.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that while notices of religious and other meetings are allowed to be shown on the Notice Boards in the Post Offices, the notices of the Postmen's Trade Union have been removed by the officials; and whether he will undertake that in future the announcements of the Postmen's Union shall have the same advantages as other notices of an un-official character?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): So long as the Association to which the hon. Member refers conducts its operations in defiance of regulation, I shall certainly not allow its notices to appear on the Official Notice Boards. Where such notices have been put up without authority, they have been removed with my approval.

Mr. C. GRAHAM: That is no answer to my question. I must press for an answer to the first part of the question.

*Mr. RAIKES: Will the hon. Member kindly repeat it?

Mr. C. GRAHAM read the first paragraph of the question.

*Mr. RAIKES: My answer is, yes.

Mr. C. GRAHAM: I am sorry, but I fail to see any answer in the reply of the right hon. Gentleman.

*Mr. RAIKES: I shall be glad to repeat my answer if the hon. Gentleman did not catch it. What I said was that as long as the Association to which the hon. Member refers conducts its operations in defiance of the Regulations, its notices will not be allowed to appear on the Official Notice Boards. Where such notices have been put up without authority, they have been removed with my approval.

MEETING OF POSTMEN.

Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether an overseer from the London Western District Post Office was employed officially to attend a meeting of postmen on 16th May, in order to take the names or numbers of postmen who attended such meeting; and whether this overseer was taken from his ordinary duties to perform this work, or whether he was paid extra for it; and, if so, to what amount?

*Mr. RAIKES: No, Sir.

ISLE OF SKYE.

Mr. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that considerable hardship is occasioned to litigants, compulsory officers, defaulting parents, and others in the Island of Skye, from having to travel great distances to attend the Sheriff Court at Portree; and whether he will order the revival of the former custom of the Sheriffs holding quarterly Courts at Uig, Dunvegan, Broadford, and other centres of population?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. Robertson, Bute): I have to inform the hon. Member that the matter he directs attention to in this question is at present receiving my attention.

SCOTCH MEDICAL OFFICERS OF HEALTH.

Mr. FRASER-MACKINTOSH: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to a sum of £74,500 which appears in the Votes for Civil Services for the current year under the head of "Medical Officers of Health and Inspectors of Nuisances," whether any similar grant is made to Scotland, where sanitation appointments are compulsory, while it is optional in England; and whether in the inquiry promised this matter will be taken up and the anomaly removed?

Mr. GOSCHEN: The hon. Member is under a misapprehension. The item of £74,500 to which he refers does not appear in the Estimates for the current year. It appeared in the Estimates for 1888-89 for the last time, and an analogous item was continued for Scotland till the year after. Both grants have now disappeared under the Local Government Acts, and in both cases an equivalent has been given in the form of licences.

THE ORDNANCE SURVEY OF SOUTH WALES.

Mr. ALFRED THOMAS (Glamorgan, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture why, according to the official Report of the Ordnance Survey of 1889, no progress has been made in the publication of the new one-inch sheets Ordnance Survey of certain parts of South Wales, including the most densely inhabited portions of Glamorganshire; and if he would explain the reason of this delay, and state when such publications may be expected to be issued?

Mr. CHAPLIN: I am informed that it is not the case that no progress has been made in the publication of the new one-inch sheets of the Ordnance Survey of certain parts of South Wales. Five sheets of the new one-inch map of South Wales have been published in outline with contour lines. But owing to the pressure of other work connected with the completion of the maps of England on the larger scales of 25 and six inches to a mile, comparatively small progress has been made in the publication of the new series of the smaller map on the scale of one inch to a mile. Attention has been directed to the matter with the view of expediting, so far as may be practicable, the publication of these maps. I am sorry that I am unable to say when the sheets of South Wales will be issued.

TELEGRAMS AT KILNALECK.

MR. KNOX (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he could state what sum of money was received for telegrams despatched from and to the office at Kilnaleck, in County Cavan, during the past year; what was the extra cost occasioned by the telegraph to Kilnaleck during that time; and what sum of money has been demanded from the guarantors, and for how many years are they still liable?

*MR. RAIKES: The Kilnaleck office was opened for telegraph business under a guarantee of £39 a year for seven years from the 7th May, 1889. The guarantors are, therefore, still liable for six years from that date. The receipts for the past year amounted to £18 10s. 8d., and the difference between that sum and £39, namely, £20 9s. 4d., has been demanded from the guarantors. The value of received telegrams is not in any case taken into account. The extra cost for the year is represented by the amount of the guarantee, namely, £39.

AGRICULTURAL VALUATION.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he has now considered the representations repeatedly made in the past year by leading practical agriculturists, and by various bodies representing agricultural interests, as to the unsatisfactory working of the present system of agricultural valuation and the failure of existing laws to adequately protect the interest of tenant farmers in their improvements; whether he is aware that, by an Act passed last year, the procedure under "The Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Act, 1883," has been amended by the adoption of the principle of arbitration by a single referee; and whether, having regard to the generally recognised necessity for amending existing laws, he will endeavour to secure facilities for the Second Reading of the Agricultural Holdings Bill and other Bills dealing with these questions, with a view to refer them to a Select Committee?

MR. CHAPLIN: It is within my knowledge that the Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Act, 1883, has been amended in the manner referred to in the question, and I am quite aware that in that and in some other respects it is quite possible that the Agricultural Holdings Act for England might be amended with advantage. But no representations have been made to the Board, and I have no information of my own which leads me to believe that tenant-farmers are unable under the existing laws to secure the fair compensation for their improvements to which they are fully entitled. On the contrary, as far as I can learn, I believe there never was a time when the attainment of that object was more entirely within their own control than it is at present. In reply to the third paragraph of the question, the hon. Member must know perfectly well that in the present state of public business, when the available time of the Government is already counted by hours, it would be impossible for me to secure facilities for the discussion of the measure for which he is responsible, which deals with a great variety of very important matters, and some of which are of a controversial character. With regard to the other Bills to which he refers, I may remind him that I have already done my best to secure the Second Reading of one of the Bills, which deals with an admitted grievance, and on which there appeared to be no difference of opinion, namely, the Bill of my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Wirral Division of Cheshire (Colonel Cotton). This, however, to my great regret, was prevented by the opposition of the hon. Member himself. I venture to hope that he may be persuaded to withdraw his opposition and allow my hon. Friend's Bill to become law during the present Session. With regard to the question of valuation and the other matters arising out of or connected with it, they are now under consideration.

MR. CHANNING: Will the right hon. Gentleman consent to the extension of the Bill of the hon. Member for the Wirral Division in accordance with the

Amendment I have placed on the Paper; and will he consent at the earliest possible period to the appointment of a Committee to go into the whole question of agricultural valuation and the other questions dealt with in the Bill to which I have referred?

Mr. CHAPLIN: I am afraid that I cannot add to the reply I have already given to the hon. Member. I must ask him to give notice of any further question.

THE METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Mr. ROWNTREE (Scarborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department the numbers of the Metropolitan Police employed on special duty, or diverted from the performance of their ordinary duties, on account of the Epsom races?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Matthews, Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Chief Commissioner that he sees grave objections to making public the details of police arrangements on particular occasions, or the numbers of police who are detached from their ordinary duties on such occasions as Epsom races. I must therefore ask the hon. Member, in the public interest, not to press me for this information.

Mr. OCTAVIUS V. MORGAN (Battersea): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state the number of police officers of each rank, namely, Inspectors, Sergeants, and Constables in the Metropolitan Police Force, who have been pensioned within the last 12 months who have respectively completed 15, 20, and 25 years' service?

Mr. MATTHEWS: The Commissioner of Police has furnished me with the Return asked for, and I shall be happy to show it to the hon. Gentleman.

THE ZAMBESI RIVER.

Sir J. SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty when the results of the survey of the mouths of the Zambesi River, which was made last year under the direction of the Admiralty, will be published?

Lord G. HAMILTON: No complete survey of the mouths of the Zambesi was made last year. Her Majesty's ship *Stork*, however, when entering the Chinde mouth of the river, noted the sounding and sent in an incomplete sketch of this entrance. In default of a survey this sketch was published in March last as a chart. A "notice to mariners" containing all the information then in the possession of the Admiralty had been previously issued in October, 1889.

SIERRA LEONE—MR. COPLAND CRAWFORD.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies how many days Mr. Copland Crawford remained in prison in Sierra Leone after he was sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment for causing a native servant to be flogged to death; what was the date of his arrival in Liverpool, and also the date of his final release; and whether any decision has been arrived at concerning his claim to a pension?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Baron H. de Worms, Liverpool, East Toxteth): It appears from the records connected with the case that Mr. Crawford had undergone imprisonment since 11th April, 1889. The trial ended on 20th July. On 29th July the officer administering the Government reported that, on the advice of a Medical Board, he had caused Mr. Crawford to be handed over to the custody of the police for safe detention in the colonial hospital. He left Sierra Leone on 8th August. Therefore, after conviction he remained in prison nine days, and in the colonial hospital in custody 10 days. He arrived at Liverpool on 24th August, was at once examined by Dr. Ross and Dr. Beamish, and immediately released. His employment at Sierra Leone was only on a temporary engagement for six months, which expired on 11th March, 1889, before the time when he was brought to trial. There is, therefore, no question of any claim to pension or gratuity of any kind; but I may add that no pension could, under any circumstances, be awarded to an officer convicted of felony and sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment with hard labour.

CROFTERS IN WEST ARDNAMURCHAN.

Colonel MALCOLM (Argyllshire): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Crofter Commissioners have fixed Tobermory as the place for their Court when holding the inquiry into the condition of the Crofters in West Ardnamurchan; if so, how the Crofters (many of them aged) are to reach Tobermory, and who is to pay for their subsistence when attending the Court; and whether he will consider the advisability of holding the Court as Kilchoan, where there is a decent hotel, and which would be easily reached by the people concerned?

Mr. J. P. B. BOBERTSON: The Crofter Commissioners fixed on Tobermory as the most suitable place for hearing the cases of the West Ardnamurchan crofters after they had communicated with the factor on the estate, and also with the agent for the crofters, who both agreed that this would be the most convenient place to hold the sittings.

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHAPLAINS IN SCOTLAND.

Mr. J. WILSON (Lanark, Govan): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether it is lawful for Parochial Boards in Scotland (should they deem it expedient) to appoint a Roman Catholic chaplain in poor houses in Scotland, and to allow him a suitable remuneration; or whether it is illegal to appoint as chaplain any person other than a clergyman of the Established Church?

Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to postpone the question until Thursday.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

Lord H. BRUCE (Wilts, Chippenham): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board when the Housing of the Working Classes Acts (Amendment) Bill, as also the Housing of the Working Classes Acts (Consolidation) Bill, will be printed?

*The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I believe that both Bills will be in the Vote Office to-day.

THE MUZZLING ORDER.

Mr. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture in what districts the Muzzling Order for dogs has been rescinded; if he can state the number of cases of rabies during the past year; and whether it is proposed to continue the Muzzling Order in the Metropolis, and if statistics prove that if it were extended for six months to the whole Kingdom the disease would entirely disappear?

Sir H. ROSCOE (Manchester, S.): May I ask whether it is not the fact that the registration of dogs has signally failed in the Continental cities where it has been adopted; and whether the right hon. Gentleman will reconsider his decision as to replacing muzzling by registration?

Mr. CHAPLIN: Yes, Sir; I am aware of both of the facts referred to by the hon. Member; but I must remind him that the Order which has recently been made by the Board of Agriculture—substituting a collar for the muzzle—only extends to those districts in which we have reason to believe that the disease has ceased to exist. In reply to the question on the Paper, the Muzzling Order has been modified in those parts of Essex, Herts, Kent, and Surrey, which are outside the Metropolitan Police District. The number of cases of rabies during last year was 340. The Muzzling Order has never at any time been extended to the whole Kingdom, and there are no statistics to show what the effect of the Order would be if it were made universal. From the progress made already, I anticipate that rabies may be effectually dealt with without any necessity for so stringent a measure.

WINE FROM RAISINS.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the attention of the Foreign Office has been drawn to the recent discovery on the Continent of a method of making wine from raisins, giving much better results than wine-making from grapes; whether this has led to the imposition in France of a heavy Excise Duty on raisins; and if he can lay upon the Table Papers upon this subject?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: We have no detailed information on the subject of the manufacture of wine from raisins, or of the reasons for the imposition of a heavy Excise Duty on them; but a

Report has been called for from the Commercial Attaché to the Embassy in Paris.

BRITISH EXPORTS TO THE UNITED STATES.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if the attention of the Prime Minister has been directed to the fact that the House of Representatives of the United States has passed, practically without amendment, the proposals for the imposition of enhanced and prohibitory duties upon the importation of cutlery, tin plates, iron hoops, linen goods, and other articles of British export; and if, having regard to the disastrous effect the approval of the Bill by the Senate must have upon the trades of Sheffield, the Midland Counties, South Wales, and Belfast, Her Majesty's Government will adhere to the view expressed on the 6th ultimo, that the free import system in the United Kingdom precludes the instruction of Her Majesty's Minister at Washington to represent to the American Government the injury the proposed legislation is calculated to do to the industry of a friendly Power, which gave last year a free market to £95,000,000 worth of competing American goods?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: We have not yet received a copy of the Tariff Bill as it passed the House of Representatives; but we have heard by telegraph that it underwent no important alterations. In reply to the second question of my hon. and gallant Friend, I can only say, as I have done before, that it would be impossible to object to such legislation because it is founded on a protective policy. Our free admission of foreign manufactures generally rest on the adoption of a contrary system.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (LIFE-SAVING APPLIANCES) ACT.

CAPTAIN PRICE (Devonport): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, with reference to the notice given that the operation of the Rules drawn under the Merchant Shipping (Life-Saving Appliances) Act of 1888 would take effect from the 1st of November next, how long prior to that date would notice be given to shipowners and the public as to what appliances have been sanctioned under those Rules?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I have laid the Revised Rules drawn under the Merchant Shipping (Life-Saving Appliances) Act upon the Table of the House this day, and the public, therefore, can procure copies of them at once.

SCOTCH FARM SERVANTS.

MR. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to the inconvenience which is caused to farm servants in Scotland by the absence of uniformity in the dates fixed for their removal from their houses; and whether he will introduce a measure to remedy this inconvenience?

MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: The existence of the inconvenience referred to in the question of the hon. Member has been represented to me, and the question will have my immediate consideration.

THE REGULATION OF RAILWAYS ACT.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade how many applications have been made to the Board of Trade under Section 6 of "The Regulation of Railways Act, 1868"?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: None, Sir.

CHURCH PROPERTY AND REVENUES.

MR. CHANNING: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the first portion of the Return of the Property and Revenues of the Church of England and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, promised this month, will be printed and distributed?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners that they are now engaged in correcting a draft of this Return, and they hope to have it ready for presentation before the end of the month.

THE UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Scottish University Commissioners, who are understood to have already taken much evidence on the question of the changes to be introduced into the conditions attaching to the Chairs in the Faculty of Divinity, propose to present at an early period the Special Report to Her Majesty upon this matter, which they are directed to make by the Universities (Scotland) Act of 1889?

Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: Since the hon. Gentleman gave notice of the question, I have not been able to obtain an answer from the Commissioners.

Mr. BRYCE: I will repeat the question next week.

SOUTH AFRICA.

Mr. ERNEST BECKETT (York, N.R., Whitby): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, since negotiations with Germany respecting the delimitation of frontiers and spheres of influence have been open, the Germans have pushed forward their agents and emissaries into regions to the North and rear of the territory belonging to the South African Company; whether Germany is bound by the Treaty of 1886, and by the pledges given by Prince Bismarck to Sir E. Malet in 1887 not to occupy or permit operations in these regions; and whether the Government will make it a condition of resuming negotiations that the *status quo* shall be strictly maintained, and that no advance on one side or the other shall be sanctioned or recognised while negotiations are going on?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: We have no information of any German expeditions to the North and rear of territory belonging to the South African Company. The engagements of 1886 and 1887, which have been, and are, respected by the Germans, related to territories in which the British and German East African Companies were interested. It is understood between the two Governments that, while negotiations are pending, the *status quo* shall, as far as possible, be maintained as regards territories under discussion.

PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the failure in many cases to comply with the provisions of the 5th section of "The Prosecution of Offences Act, 1879," which direct the clerks to Justices, &c., to transmit to the Director of Public Prosecutions a copy of all depositions and other documents relating to any prosecution withdrawn or not proceeded with within a reasonable time; will he state the average number of cases during the last five years in relation to which depositions and documents have been transmitted to the Director of Public Prosecutions in accordance with the above provision, and also the number of cases in which the Director of Public Prosecutions has taken action thereon; and is there any instance of a clerk to a Justice or to a Police Court having been proceeded against according to law for failure to comply with the foregoing enactment?

Mr. MATTHEWS: No, Sir; my attention has not been called to any failure in this respect. The duties of the Local Authority and of the Director of Public Prosecutions respectively are laid down in the Regulations framed in pursuance of the Acts of 1879 and 1884, and approved by Parliament. Between August, 1884, and the 1st of March, 1890, the number of cases which were withdrawn or not proceeded with, and in which information was sent to the Director, is 206. Of these, nine were taken up by the Director. The Director informs me that he is not aware of any such proceedings having been taken as are referred to in the last paragraph.

POST OFFICE *EMPLOYÉS.*

Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Attorney General whether the law forbidding employers of labour to fine their *employés* applies to the Postmaster General in relation to postmen; and whether the Postmaster General has legal power to fine Post Office *employés* either in money or by imposing extra duty without pay?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. Webster, Isle of Wight): Apart from the Truck Acts and certain special Trade Statutes, which have no application to the hon. Member's question, there is not, so far as I know, any Statute or Rule of Law forbidding the Postmaster General or any other employer of labour to impose fines or make deductions from wages for misconduct or breach of rules.

Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman whether he will state what restrictions the Postmaster General has legal power to impose upon Post Office *employés* when not on duty; and whether he will state whether the Postmaster General has any legal power to interfere with postmen for attending public or trade union meetings when not on duty?

Sir R. WEBSTER: It is not possible to answer the first paragraph of the hon. Member's question, as it raises a mere abstract question of law. The Postmaster General can make such rules as are in his judgment necessary for the proper fulfilment of their duties by the persons employed by him, and is entitled to dismiss from the service those persons who are not willing to conform thereto.

Mr. C. GRAHAM: I should be glad if the hon. and learned Gentleman could give me a more definite answer. A man without any wish to infringe the law may sometimes do so in ignorance.

Sir R. WEBSTER: I would gladly give the hon. Member any assistance in my power; but the matter is not one that can be more definitely stated in answer to a question.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING IN LONDON.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether the new Electric Light Companies in London are legally empowered to disfigure the streets, and greatly increase the risk of fires, by putting their wires overhead instead of underground?

Sir R. WEBSTER: In reply to the hon. Member, under the Electric Lighting Acts of 1882 and 1888 powers are reserved to the County Council and to the Board of Trade for regulating and controlling the cases in which overhead wires may be used, and in my opinion these powers are sufficient. The information before me does not tend to show that overhead wires increase the risk of fires.

COUNTY COURT REGISTRARS.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Attorney General whether any arrangement has yet been formally determined on by the Lord Chancellor, by which Registrars of County Courts, whose income amounts to £1,000 per year, are required to devote their whole time to the duties of the office?

Sir R. WEBSTER: I am informed by the Lord Chancellor that any appointments made since the County Courts Act, 1888, where the salary is sufficient to obtain a fit and proper Registrar it has been made a condition that the Registrar shall not practice as solicitor and notary, and arrangements of the same principle will be made in the case of any existing Registrar who may consent thereto. I need not point out to the hon. Member that by the provisions of Sections 25 and 45 of the Act of 1888 the rights of Registrars holding appointments at the time of the passing of the Act were preserved.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: Does the Lord Chancellor consider £1,000 a sufficient salary?

Sir R. WEBSTER: As far as I am informed, the Lord Chancellor states that £1,000 a year is quite a sufficient salary, and I think that even a smaller sum would be sufficient.

THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE.

Mr. J. KELLY (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether he can state the reason for which three Judges have lately been sitting in one of the Divisional Courts of the Queen's Bench; whether, for the last 10 years, the practice of three Judges so sitting together in banc has been abandoned; and whether the return to the old practice is intended to be general, and so to cause further delays in the trial of the actions in the Queen's Bench Division?

Sir R. WEBSTER: Before answering the question of my hon. and learned Friend I must respectfully protest against the suggestion implied in the last paragraph, that the practice is intended to cause delays in the trials of actions in the Queen's Bench Division. Nothing, in my opinion, has ever taken place to justify such a suggestion. The formation of a Division Court of three Judges is due to important representations made two years ago, on the part of the Bar and the Incorporated Law Society, to the effect that it was desirable that application for new trials should be dealt with by Courts composed of three Judges. Prior to the present sittings, various causes, especially the absence of two of the Judges on the Special Commission, and the illness of several others, have rendered the formation of such Courts impossible; but I understand that, when practicable, the hearing of cases of the kind by Courts so composed is intended to be general.

In reply to a further question by Mr. J. KELLY,

SIR R. WEBSTER said: I am aware that there is a feeling among many members of the Bar on the subject; but whether it represents the majority or not I am unable to say.

PRIVATE BILL PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

MR. BRYCE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can indicate any time at which he will take the Second Reading of the Private Bill Procedure (Scotland) Bill?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I regret that I am not able to name a day for the Second Reading of the Bill; but I hope that it will be possible to take it very shortly.

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

MR. J. E. ELLIS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, inasmuch as on 20th May he stated

> "If it becomes necessary for the Government to make proposals for a further extension of time, then the views of the Government with regard to the future progress of business may be properly put forward,"

and on the 23rd May he made such a proposal without giving the views of the Government, he will now, for the convienence of the House, make such a statement as to business as he did on the 17th June, 1889, when making a similar Motion to that carried on the 23rd May this year?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Sir, the hon. Gentleman cannot expect me to answer this question to-day. I hope to be able to make a statement in the course of a few days.

IRELAND—THE POLICE AND MEETINGS IN ENNIS.

MR. O'KEEFFE (Limerick City): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if it be true, as reported in the Press, that at a meeting held in the house of Mr. Dennis M'Namara, in Ennis, on Tuesday last, to make arrangements for a demonstration to demand a public inquiry into the treatment of John Daly and other Irish prisoners in England, that a police sergeant interrupted the proceedings and took the names of those present; and, if so, by what authority the policeman in question entered this private house, and what, if any, was his legal right so to do?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Constabulary authorities report that the meeting referred to was not held in a private residence, but in Mr. M'Namara's public house. The police had reason to suppose that it was an attempt to hold a meeting of the local branch of the National League, which was declared to be unlawful in that district. Upon being informed by one of the leading members of the meeting that such was not the case the police left the premises.

MR. COX (Clare, E.): May I ask how, not having a licence, Mr. M'Namara could have a licenced house?

[No answer was given.]

MR. M'ENERY.

MR. O'KEEFFE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed by the Prisons Board to the following Report made by Dr. Moorhead, Visiting Justice, Tullamore Gaol:—

> "23rd May, 1890.
>
> "Mr. M'Enery complains that yesterday he was reduced 15 marks by the chief warder for not having sufficient work done, that he has been suffering from dyspepsia in the prison, for which he is at present under medical treatment, and that consistent with his condition of health he is as industrious as he possibly can be. In view of the fact that Mr. M'Enery is at present under medical treatment for a very disabling disease, dyspepsia, I would recommend to the authorities that his task work be suspended until such time as his health is restored;"

and whether, having regard to the fact that by medical authority Mr. M'Enery's health is affected, and that he has still over seven months' imprisonment to undergo with hard labour, for publishing a newspaper article, he will direct special attention to his condition?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The General Prisons Board report that it is the case that the prisoner mentioned was deprived of 15 marks for idleness, the medical officer of the prison having then reported that there was nothing in his condition to prevent him from performing his work. The medical officer now further reports that the complaint of the prisoner is of a slight nature, and that there is absolutely nothing in his condition to prevent him from performing his task. There does not appear to be anything in the case calling for special attention.

RAILWAY FROM GALWAY TO CLIFDEN.

MR. PINKERTON (Galway): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if any decision has been arrived at by the Government with regard to the construction of the line of railway from Galway to Clifden, approved of by the Royal Commission; and, if so, when will that decision be carried into effect?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): No decision has yet been arrived at by the Government with regard to the construction of a railway from Galway to Clifden.

INCOME TAX (IRELAND).

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will agree to the Return as to Income Tax (Ireland), which stands on the Paper for to-day?

MR. GOSCHEN: I must ask the hon. Member to postpone the question for a few days.

THE CAPITATION ALLOWANCE IN IRELAND.

MR. PENROSE FITZGERALD (Cambridge): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is the case that the Commissioners of Irish National Education, in a communication addressed to His Grace the Lord Archbishop of Dublin, and dated 13th December, 1888, stated that they had agreed to submit to the Lords of Her Majesty's Treasury for their sanction a proposal of the Standing Committee of the General Synod of the Church of Ireland, to the effect that the Capitation allowance, which stopped at schools of 15 in average attendance, should be extended to schools of from 10 to 15 in average attendance; whether, in a further communication to the Archbishop in March, 1889, it was stated that the proposal had not received the sanction of the Lords of the Treasury; whether a deputation from the Standing Committee had waited on him (the Chief Secretary) last January, to point out the importance which the Committee attached to the proposed extension of the Capitation allowance, together with the smallness of the amount necessary for carrying it out; and whether, in consideration of the improved financial position of the Treasury, there was a prospect of the requisite sanction soon being obtained?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My hon. Friend is aware that the question to which he refers is one not without difficulty, and it is still under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

EVICTIONS AT FALCARRAGH.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, within the next few weeks, 39 families are to be evicted from the Stewart Estate, at Falcarragh, and six families from the Swiney Estate, in the same district, and whether more than 60 families are about the same time to be evicted from the Olphert Estate; whether the forces of the Crown will be employed in the carrying out of these evictions; and is Falcarragh to be included in the congested districts for which special provision is contemplated under the Land Purchase Bill through the agency of the Board to be created by that measure?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Sheriff has applied for protection to carry out evictions on the Stewart and Swiney Estates to the extent stated in the first paragraph of the question. No application has been yet received in regard to the Olphert Estate. The forces of the Crown will not be employed in carrying out the evictions; but they will be present in compliance with the requisition of the Sheriff to afford him and his officers protection should the occasion arise. Falcarragh is within the congested district contemplated by the Bill.

Mr. MAC NEILL: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the last paragraph of the question, namely, whether Falcarragh is included in the congested districts under the Land Purchase Bill?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes.

Mr. MAC NEILL: As a matter of policy, to say nothing of humanity, will not the right hon. Gentleman see the propriety of arresting the employment of the forces of the Crown until the benevolent schemes of the Government can be put into operation?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It is not a matter of policy or humanity, but simply of upholding the law.

Mr. MAC NEILL: Am I to understand that the Government have no option in the matter, and that they are obliged to employ the forces of the Crown in battering down the houses of these poor tenants?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no ground for believing that the kind of resistance the hon. Gentleman alludes to will be made by the tenants against the sheriff, who will simply act in the performance of a duty imposed on him by a Court of Law.

ASSAULTING THE IRISH POLICE.

Mr. MAC NEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to a case in which five men were, a few days ago, charged before two Resident Magistrates at Portumna with assaulting two constables of the Royal Irish Constabulary, named M'Gowan and Grady, and two emergency men, named Kingsbury and Dobson, who swore that they had been way-laid and assaulted by the accused, Constable Grady being compelled to discharge his rifle in self-protection, and which case was, notwithstanding the positive swearing of the constables, dismissed by the Magistrates, the evidence for the defence being that the constables and the emergency men were under the influence of drink, and had attacked the accused; and whether these constables are still to be permitted to return to their positions, or whether any steps will be taken by the Government to mark its sense of their conduct?

Mr. A. J. Balfour

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am making inquiry, but have not yet received a Report.

ASSAULT AT MILLSTREET.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether any inquiry is being made into an assault upon a poor woman and her husband, named Sullivan, who were waylaid and dreadfully beaten near Millstreet, County Cork, on Tuesday night last, the 3rd instant, on their way home, and, after being attacked and wounded, struggled into the house of a postboy named Buckley, who in consequence was stoned by the gang; whether he is aware that the Sullivans were medically treated in the Millstreet Union Hospital by Dr. Leader, who refused to give a certificate to the effect that Sullivan's life was out of danger; whether many similar assaults have taken place near Millstreet during the past year; whether the police have arrested and brought to justice any of the gang notoriously implicated in this and other similar recent outrages; and whether steps will be immediately taken to ascertain who are the employers of the gang?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to defer the question until to-morrow.

Dr. TANNER: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman how many police are now stationed in and about Millstreet?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that there are stationed in the town of Millstreet one District Inspector, one Head Constable, and 19 men, and that there are two huts, each four miles distant from Millstreet, having a party of five men each.

IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

Mr. JORDAN (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Michael O'Brien, Freyhanes, Mullagh, County Clare, did on the 14th April last send three of his children to Annagh (8528) National School, and if on the same day they were ordered to leave "for want of room," and did they leave; whether on the 15th April he sent four of his children to Mullagh (3928) National School, and if they were informed on the 16th April that "they could not be permitted to remain there"; whether, on appealing to the Commissioners of National Education on the 18th April and 3rd May, he was informed by them on the 8th May that "there was another school (Coore) conveniently situated for his children to attend"; whether Coore School is two and a half miles from O'Brien's residence, Mullagh one and a half, and Annagh only half a mile distant; whether there is sufficient accommodation in both Annagh and Mullagh Schools for O'Brien's children; whether, according to the Rules of the Commissioners of National Education, O'Brien may insist on having his children taught at the most convenient school; and will steps be taken to inquire into and remedy this matter?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Commissioners of National Education report that it appears O'Brien's family had regularly attended Coore School until about 12 months ago when an attack was made upon that school, without any ground for complaint against the teachers, this school being efficiently conducted. The manager of the other two schools mentioned has declined to receive the children of O'Brien, as these schools are already overcrowded. The Commissioners do not see anything in the case calling for action on their part.

MR. JORDAN: Was it competent for the manager, according to the Rules of the Commissioners, to refuse to receive the children?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I gather that there was no violation of the Rules of the National Board.

MR. JORDAN: What is the number of children attending these schools?

MR. E. HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): And what is the limit of the area allowed for each child?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot answer these questions without notice.

DONAGHADEE HARBOUR.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he has yet received any official Report as to the present condition of the harbour at Donaghadee, County Down; and if any steps will be taken to render it safe for vessels calling there?

MR. JACKSON: Yes; I have received a Report upon the condition of this harbour, but I only received it within the last day or two, and have not had an opportunity of considering it.

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.): Did the Inspector who went down to Donaghadee make any inquiry, and what soundings did he take?

MR. JACKSON: It was not necessary for any Inspector to take soundings. He would be able to see at once the condition of the harbour.

SLAVERY ON THE CONGO.

MR. A. E. PEASE (York): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether the shipment of labourers from Zanzibar to the Congo, amongst whom are large numbers of slaves, has been brought under the notice of the Brussels Conference with a view to its being investigated; and, if not, will immediate steps be taken towards this end?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The functions of a Conference are not judicial, and it is not probable that the President would permit the discussion of matters not involving international agreements on the subject of the Slave Trade.

THE INDIAN COUNCILS BILL,

MR. BRADLAUGH: I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury after what hour to-night he will not take this Bill?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Bill will not be taken after 10 o'clock.

PURCHASE OF LAND, &c. (IRELAND) BILL—MR. SPEAKER AND INSTRUCTIONS.

MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I think, Sir, it will be for the convenience of the House if you would now allow me to put to you a question concerning the first Order of the Day—whether you would now think fit to state to the House your view of the Instruction that I have put on the Paper with reference to that Order?

[Mr. Morley's Instruction was as follows:—

"On Motion for going into Committee on Purchase of Land and Congested Districts (Ireland) Bill, to move that it be an Instruction to the Committee, that they have power to make provision for the creation of Local Authorities, whose assent shall be necessary to the imposition of any liability upon Local Revenues for the purposes of this Bill."]

*Mr. SPEAKER: The original Motion for the Instruction put down in the name of the right hon. Gentleman I thought was out of order, and the right hon. Gentleman was good enough to modify that and to put upon the Paper the Instruction as it now stands. I have had communication by letter and personally with the right hon. Gentleman, and I beg to acknowledge the impartiality with which he put forward his views in support of the Instruction now on the Paper. I have informed him that my difficulty has been as to the vagueness of the Instruction, both in regard to the power of limiting the Debate under its terms and the vagueness of the Instruction as affording no definite guidance to the Committee when they come to discuss clauses for the purpose of carrying it into effect. The right hon. Gentleman was good enough to explain the definite purposes with which he put the Instruction on the Paper; and it then occurred to me that the purposes which he wished to carry out under the Instruction might possibly be in the power of the Committee to effect without the necessity for an Instruction. Before, however, informing him of that view I communicated, as I thought it my duty to do, with the Chairman of Committees, who would have jurisdiction in the matter, and I am at liberty to say that right hon. Gentleman told me that in Committee it would be permissible for the Committee to introduce Amendments and clauses carrying out the wishes of the right hon. Gentleman as specified by himself. These objects are the creation either of a separate authority or of a composite body composed of Boards of Guardians, Grand Juries, or Presentment Sessions to watch the interests of the locality for fear lest liabilities should be incurred under the provisions of the Bill which it might be unwise to saddle on those localities. They would watch the interests of the localities, and they would, if they thought the bargain a bad one in individual cases, have the power of vetoing the transaction. These are the specific objects, I believe, as stated by the right hon. Gentleman, and I believe these objects might be carried out by Amendments or clauses in Committee. Under these conditions, and with that explanation, I have to say that the Instruction would be irregular, but only irregular inasmuch as it would seek to empower the Committee to do that which in my opinion, and in the opinion, I may add, of the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees, it has perfect power to do.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): Perhaps, Sir, you will allow me to put to you, not so much for immediate answer as for consideration, a question which arose, not out of the reply you have been good enough just now to give from the Chair, but out of the whole circumstances connected with Instructions which have recently occurred. They evidently show, what I think I am pretty well aware of in other ways, that there is a great uncertainty in the minds of many Members and very great obscurity on the subject of Instructions to Committees as to what can and what cannot be moved. I would ask you, Sir, to be good enough to consider whether it would be expedient to order a search to be made in the records of this House and a list to be prepared and circulated for the information of the House of the various Instructions to Committees that have been moved at various periods during the present reign. I do not know whether you will think fit to reply at the present moment; but, if not, I would request you to take the matter into consideration.

*Mr. SPEAKER: I have naturally, within the last few weeks, given special attention to the whole subject, and if the right hon. Gentleman and the House will permit me I would like to state my views as explicitly as I can to the House. I have searched the precedents connected with Instructions. The House will, perhaps, be best put in the possession of my views on the subject when I say that there is a very vast and material difference between Instructions to a Committee and an Amendment on the Second Reading of a Bill, or of a Resolution on the Second Reading of a Bill which traverses the principle of the Bill. When a Bill has been read a second time the House has assented to the principle of the Bill. In the last few years a Standing Order has been passed stating that when the House is prepared to go into Committee the Speaker is to leave the Chair without Question put; but there is a reservation made with regard to Instructions to the Committee. It would be obvious to the House that if an Instruction moved on that occasion were to traverse the principle of the Bill, or go so far outside the limits and scope and framework of the Bill as to set up an alternative scheme, or a counter proposition to the Bill, that would virtually be a Second Reading Debate over again. It would be an Amendment to the principle of the Bill, and would therefore reduce to a minimum, and would nullify altogether, the provision which the House has passed in the Standing Order, which states that, when the House is prepared to go into Committee, I should leave the Chair at once without any Question put. There is nothing in the precedents, I believe, which go beyond an Instruction of this nature—an Instruction to amplify the machinery of the Bill to carry out the general purpose and scope of the Bill within the general framework and idea of the Bill. There is no Instruction that I am aware of—certainly not since the alteration in the Standing Order—which could be construed into the traversing of the principle of the Second Reading of a Bill. I may be permitted to add that I attach importance in a high degree to the whole question of Instructions. It is no matter to me what Government is in power; but I say it in the interest of any body of gentlemen who may constitute the Government of the day, and I say it in the interests of every private Member who may have a Bill before the House, that if what I think, and I unhesitatingly say, is an abuse of Instructions, be carried much further, I believe it will be fatal to the transaction of business, not only by the Government, but by any individual Member who may be in charge of a Bill. I hope the House will forgive me for having spoken very frankly on the matter. I have no other interest at heart than the transaction of business in this House, and I believe the House will agree with me that various Instructions to carry out the principle of a Bill constitute a very different category altogether from Instructions by which it is sought to traverse the principle of the Bill and so resume the Debate which, in my opinion, ought to be settled on the conclusion of the Second Reading.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I hope, Mr. Speaker, you will kindly consider the question I ventured to address to you with regard to the searching of the records and the production of the various Instructions.

*MR. SPEAKER: I think it would be rather an unusual proceeding for the Speaker to search for precedents and have them laid before the Members of the House. I should be happy, I am sure, to give every information in my power to the right hon. Gentleman, and I should be happy to lay all the precedents before him. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will be content with that.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Perhaps it would be better that I should submit a Motion for the production of these precedents.

MR. J. MORLEY: After what has passed it is not improbable that Mr. Speaker will leave the Chair on the first Order. I should like to ask whether the Government intend to proceed with the Bill this night?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: We do not intend to proceed this evening with the Bill beyond going into Committee, and after the Speaker has left the Chair I shall move to report Progress.

MR. J. MORLEY: What business will be taken to-morrow?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: We shall take the Local Taxation Bill to-morrow.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I was not in the House when the Speaker gave his ruling. I have an Instruction on the Paper on the Land Purchase Bill, but I do not know whether the Speaker has said anything about it.

*MR. SPEAKER: That Instruction is quite out of order, and quite beyond the scope of the Bill.

ELECTIONS (SCOTLAND) CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES BILL.—(No. 243.)

Bill reported from the Standing Committee on Law, &c.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 215.]

Minutes of Proceedings of the Committee to be printed. [No. 215.]

Bill, as amended by the Standing Committee, to be taken into consideration upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 331.]

ROYAL ASSENT.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners;—

The House went;—and being returned;—

Mr. SPEAKER reported the Royal Assent to,—

1. Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1890.
2. Merchant Shipping Act, 1890.

MOTION.

IRELAND—CONDUCT OF POLICE IN CASHEL AND TIPPERARY.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. DILLON, Member for the Eastern Division of the County of Mayo, rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House, for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the imminent and daily increasing danger to the public peace by reason of the violent and un-Constitutional action of the police and Magistrates towards the people in the districts of Cashel and Tipperary; but the pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than 40 Members having accordingly risen:—

(4.45.) MR. DILLON: Before I attempt to lay before the House the facts of which we complain in connection with the action of the Magistrates and the police at Cashel and Tipperary, I must briefly allude to the events which led up to those occurrences. The House is probably aware that two meetings were announced to be held at Tipperary and Cashel on the 25th and 27th of last month. These meetings were called by public placard, and full and long notice was given of the object, which was to give me a welcome on my return to Ireland and to hear addresses from Members for the County of Tipperary. As far as I am aware, no other object was stated on the placards, and I must say that I think it still lies with the Chief Secretary to state to the House on what grounds those meetings were proclaimed. As I understand, the law at present in Ireland is precisely the same with regard to putting down meetings as it is in England, and, if that is so, it has been decided over and over again that proclamation by the Executive does not constitute a meeting illegal, but the Executive which issues the proclamation must prove to a Court of Law that it is justified in doing so. The mere *ipse dixit* of the police is not sufficient justification. But I am informed that the only cause alleged by the Chief Secretary in justification of the proclamation was that in his opinion the holding of those meetings would have a tendency to increase boycotting and intimidation in Tipperary. I may be wrong, but I believe that that forms no justification under the Common Law; on the contrary, the Executive must be furnished with sworn evidence that the holding of the meeting would be sufficient to cause a person of ordinary fortitude to be placed in terror of his life or of bodily danger. For my own part, I am prepared to contend that these meetings were legal all along, even after the proclamation was issued, and that no justification whatever existed for the proclamation. In answer to a question the Chief Secretary, before the Whitsuntide Recess, said that the increase of what he called outrages—things which are easily manufactured in Ireland—during the months of March and Apr was the ground for proclaiming thil meetings. But there was an open-ai public meeting at Tipperary in Apri last, and the result is that the districlt has been more quiet than it was before it, as far as my information goes. If that is true, it is grossly inconsistent and unfair to fall back upon facts which occurred before those meetings as justification for prohibiting the later meetings. At all events, though we had this evidence that the previous open-air meeting had not led to an increase of violence, these two meetings were proclaimed late on the Saturday. That is a custom on the part of the Executive of which we have great cause to complain. The meeting had been placarded a fortnight, yet Dublin Castle delayed issuing the proclamation till a few hours before it was to be held. My hon. Friends and myself, believing the meetings to be legal, and knowing that it had been laid down by the Judges in Blunt's case that the

Executive have no power to make a meeting illegal simply by proclaiming it, determined to go down to Tipperary, and, by way of protest, hold a meeting as far as we prudently could. I have always taken up the position that if a meeting thus proclaimed were illegal it is our duty to go to the spot and address it, but if the Police Force was overwhelming to advise the people to disperse, in order to prevent bloodshed and disturbance. Well, we did go down to Tipperary, with the object of addressing the meeting if we could. At Limerick Junction—the nearest station to which we could get on Sunday morning, about three short miles from Tipperary—we found between 1,000 and 2,000 country people, and, by some oversight of the authorities, who are in the habit of making these mistakes, there were only about 20 policemen present. The police served us with copies of the proclamation, but we said that we did not consider it illegal, and proposed to hold a meeting, which we did. We appointed a Chairman, addresses were delivered, and a resolution was passed. The police very properly refrained from disturbing the peace, and, although they mixed freely with the people, and were rather offensive, no violence was done to them, and they were in no way injured. These 20 men were entirely at the mercy of a large crowd, yet they were in no way injured. After addressing the meeting I drove into Tipperary, leaving Mr. O'Brien and some others. On reaching Tipperary I found the entrance to the new square barred by a heavy cordon of police, who refused to allow us to pass. Two Resident Magistrates were present, and the square was held by about 200 police. While I and four other Members of Parliament and a local priest, Father Humphreys, were discussing the situation, with no people near us, and with no weapons in our hands, I heard Captain Caddell say first to a heavy body of police, "Draw your batons, men," and then "Charge and clear those fellows out." Twenty policemen then drew their batons and charged upon five unarmed men, but broke their ranks as they came up to us, and did not strike us, although the two Magistrates told them to close their ranks. After passing, the police were re-formed, and the Magistrates seemed to become rather ashamed of their conduct, for they ordered the men to put up their batons. I saw that to attempt a meeting in the square would lead to disturbance and bloodshed, and thought it best to lead a body of people out into the country, so I walked a few miles, followed by a Magistrate and a body of police. We did not get leave to hold our meeting, so we simply had a long walk on a fine summer afternoon. We were not further interfered with. In the interval Mr. O'Brien had arrived on a drag with some friends. I propose to describe what passed from the columns of the *Irish Times* and the *Dublin Daily Express*. When Mr. O'Brien drove into Tipperary he was at once stopped by the police, but the latter, when informed that there was an Englishman on the car, allowed it to pass. Then we drove on until we reached the top of the hill leading into the main street—William O'Brien Street. There we found we were not immediately followed by the police, and my hon. Friend stood up to address the people, and a large crowd collected round our drag. Then, according to the description given by the *Irish Times*, the police, led by County Inspector Stevenson, suddenly rushed upon the crowd and commenced to baton the people. Be it observed that, according to the account of this Tory newspaper, and in accordance with the actual fact, there was no call made upon the crowd to disperse, which is the proper method to pursue. The newspaper account, from which I am quoting, says some members of the police force used the butts of their rifles on the heads of the people, several of whom were knocked down and injured; free fighting was carried on in one corner, while the people fled on the other side. Mr. O'Brien called out to the Inspector not to kill the people, and Mr. Harrington and others cried out to the people to take refuge in the houses. The newspaper correspondent saw one young man, who was standing a mere spectator of the scene, struck on the head by a policeman in a mechanical sort of way, the policeman then passing on to the next man. The mother of this injured young man, a poor deformed boy he was really, uttered a wild yell and rushed after the policeman, whom she clutched by the throat with such vehemence that half choking he fell to the ground. Well, I am bound to say I think the mother did perfectly right. Very likely, if very shame does not deter the police, she will be summoned for assault before Mr. Caddell, who does the double work of batoning the people in the streets and punishing them from the Bench. In another instance a respectable young gentleman, well known in the town, received a severe blow and was knocked under a car. I mention these things as showing the scandalous, disgraceful laxity of discipline on the part of the police. Now I turn to an account which, if they will accept any account but that of the police, the Government ought to accept, the report in the *Dublin Express.* This report says that Mr. O'Brien's remarks were interrupted by the appearance of a break filled with police being driven furiously up the hill, and those of the crowd who saw this fled in all directions. Observe, the people fled, they did not offer resistance. The account goes on to say that, doubtless, others who were listening to Mr. O'Brien would also have fled had escape been possible, but before they could disperse the order to charge was given and the police with drawn batons were upon them, the Government shorthand writer taking part in the chase. There were cheers for Mr. O'Brien, shouts of defiance at the police, and a few stones were thrown, though they injured no one, and some 20 persons were knocked down by the charge. Now recollect that at the moment the batoning commenced there was no resistance to the police. One young man being struck knocked the constable down, and the two rolled over together. Will that man be prosecuted for assault? It is an important point, because, though he lawfully defended himself as any Member of this House might if attacked in the street, if he is brought before this Magistrate he will be sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. The people, says the *Express*, were terror-stricken, but several were wise enough to judge that getting among the newspaper reporters they had the best chance for their skulls. This is the description given by the Unionist newspapers, and before I proceed further, let me say, it is idle for the Chief Secretary or anyone who represents the Government to read

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us reports concocted by those very policemen whose conduct we stand here to challenge, let the right hon. Gentleman produce independent witnesses as we have. I have given the evidence of two witnesses who certainly are not prejudiced on the Nationalist side. There is, further, the evidence of Mr. Byles, an English Pressman. He describes the assembling of a crowd of about a thousand persons in the manner I have mentioned. Then he says the police rushed upon the people, batons drawn, and keeping no order, and, filled with a spirit of malice and revenge, began striking at all within reach. It is a peculiarity of the conduct of the Irish police that they invariably pursue and strike the flying people, a mockery and outrage upon keeping order. This correspondent says one stone was thrown, but he was told a policeman threw it, and that is true, it is corroborated by other accounts. Now, is the right hon. Gentleman prepared to defend the action of the police? If he is, he must be prepared to face the adverse opinion of the country. If he denies these facts, he must do so in a very different way to the manner in which he denied the facts of Mitchelstown. Up to this hour the statements he over and over again has repeated, statements to which I have given direct contradiction on the faith of my own eyes, have never had the corroboration of any single independent witness. Well, so much for the proceedings at Tipperary on that day. I shall have more to say of the permanent state of things, and the policy carried on there before I conclude, but I now proceed to allude to what took place at Boherlahan and Cashel. The police have a system of watching the leaders of the Irish Party, and, wherever we go, the police follow us on a car. I have seen them outside my hotel in a car with horses yoked. I have seen them as I went to bed, and I have seen them shivering there in the morning. Yet, so inefficient are they, or so stupid are their officers, that when we want to get away unobserved we do so, quite easily. We evaded the police force, we turned a corner and they lost sight of us, and it is a fact to note, that not a man, woman, or child would give the police a word of information to direct them to our whereabouts. Not all your power and all your secret service money could bribe or bully a Tipperary peasant into telling where we were hidden, behind a hedge. We saw the police gallop by full speed, but we escaped that Monday night, and on the following morning, no doubt, the country was scoured by police and cavalry, telegraphed for from Cahir. The Rock of Cashel was occupied by 10 constables, and from thence and from every eminence around the police swept the country with field glasses and telescopes, and at every cross-road within a circuit of three miles was a picket of mounted police or dragoons—nice work, certainly, for dragoons! In spite of all these elaborate precautions, which must have cost the taxpayers of this country a considerable sum, we held our meeting down by the banks of the Suir, within half a mile of their outposts. Of their movements our scouts gave us all information, but the police were unable to discover us. We held our meeting when we received information from our scouts that the police and cavalry had evacuated Boherlahan, and we drove into the village, where we found a gathering of country people—40 men, perhaps, and some 60 women and children, together with 10 policemen. We undertook to hold a small meeting, a very small one, but still we thought we might as well improve the shining hour. The police declared the meeting illegal, but we said: "You have not sufficient force to disperse the meeting, we consider it legal, and as it is feasible we shall not disperse." The sergeant, who was completely "off his head"—I think I never saw a man in such a fright—did not well know what to do. He threatened to break up the meeting by force. I remonstrated with him and said, "You cannot, you have not sufficient force, and your attempt will only lead to a dangerous riot." "Well," he said, "I shall have a large force here in a few minutes." "All right," I said, "when that force comes we will disperse, and you, as a sensible man, if you have any sense, should wait until that force comes and a Magistrate with it, and you will be rid of responsibility." Even while I was giving this advice, with the object of preserving the peace, a policeman gave me a violent push and tried to throw me down. It was an anxious quarter of an hour. I kept between the people and the police, pushing back violently any of our people who were inclined to be noisy or violent; and yet, while I was talking with the sergeant, a policeman struck at me with his baton. These may appear trivial things to some hon. Members, and I only mention them as showing the utter disorganisation of the police. What is to be said of a policeman who, when no violence is offered, strikes at a Member of Parliament who is exerting himself to preserve the peace? Of course, the policeman had no order to strike, and when we remember the conditions of the position we see the utter recklessness and demoralisation of the police; for there is not the slightest doubt that if I had been struck down there would have been a rush of the people and a bloody, terrible riot which the police would have been utterly unable to control. Our people would have suffered severely, for the cavalry would have been on the ground—as they did come very soon, and very glad I was to see them, for the situation was getting unpleasant. If I had been struck down there would not have been the slightest justification for the action, and the bloodshed which would have followed, the blood of our people, as well as of his comrades, would have been on the head of the police. In England, if such a case had arisen, I would have taken the number of the constable and would have summoned him before a Court. I should have looked for justice, and I have no doubt I should have obtained it. But you will not put any number or mark upon a policeman's uniform in Ireland by which a man may be identified. Why is this, unless you are ashamed of the work they are doing? If there is any class of men who ought to be identified, it is the police in Ireland, who are constantly in situations where the sense of responsibility ought to be pressed upon them, and the knowledge that they could be identified would be a wholesome check. I could not identify the man; and even if I were able to do so, the result of a summons would be that the charge would be heard before the man who is the officer of these police, who was in command of men who committed unprovoked outrages upon Nationalists in Tipperary. This officer (Mr. Caddell) is a kind of Pasha in the district; he distributes justice from the Bench, and he orders baton charges in the streets. So to summon a policeman for assault or for any other offence, is a waste of time and money. At this Boherlahan meeting the police three times tried to break it up, and three times Mr. O'Brien and I interposed between the police and the people; and, but for our exertions, the police would have been attacked, and there would have been serious injuries inflicted on either side through the idiotic unprovoked conduct of the police. The next instant a police car was seen approaching, containing four policemen, and the police driver lashed the horse into full speed, and drove right into the crowd composed mainly of women and children. I saw the shaft of the car strike a woman on the breast, and, but for two men striking the horse across the face with blackthorn sticks in order to cause the animal to rear, and then seizing the reins—but for that the car would have been driven into the midst of the people, and there is no knowing how many would have been knocked down and injured. Is that the way to conduct the suppression of a public meeting when the people are excited? I was relieved when a Magistrate and 30 dragoons appeared in sight. The very instant the police saw the dragoons they, in the most cowardly, dastardly, blackguardedly manner, and without any provocation, began striking the people in all directions, to show, I suppose, their courage and energy in the presence of their officer, and feeling safe with the presence of the soldiers. The dragoons rode down to the spot, and the adjutant called on the people to disperse. There was no order to charge. I suppose there was a fear of a remonstrance from the British officer. The people dispersed at once. But here is another instance of the spirit actuating the police. I was standing behind the dragoons who had ridden past me, and I saw the driver of the car who had tried to drive over the people jump off his car, and, without any order, draw his revolver. He stood like a brave man with a line of soldiers between him and the people who were dispersing, and three times he raised his revolver with his finger on the trigger. I was as near to him as I am now to the hon. Member in front of me. He was in no sort of danger, yet he tried to take aim between the line of horses. Now, this is an indication of the spirit and temper that exists in the force, a dangerous spirit, which, if not checked with strong reprobation, will assuredly lead to serious bloodshed in the future. It is part of the design to goad the people from that peaceful policy which you know will be successful ultimately. After this incident, ending in nothing worse than a few cut heads, we drove on to Cashel. On the road the dragoons rode close behind our cars in order to prevent the people from following. At the entrance to the town of Cashel we were met by the Resident Magistrate in charge of Cashel, Mr. Shannon. This gentleman, I may remark, is a brother to Mr. Shannon, who conducted the case for the *Times* so successfully, and has now fled to America. This Magistrate, who had been directing baton charges in Cashel during the day, seeing us with our escort of dragoons, shouted in the most aggressive tone, "Bravo, Bruen! We have batoned them like hell in Cashel to-day." Such is the tone and temper of the men in charge of the police. We dismounted from our cars at the hotel, and close by were some dozen people, mostly women, who had taken refuge from baton charges in an archway leading into the hotel yard; and when I stepped off the car these people crowded around me and began shaking hands, crying, "God bless you!" and at that moment the police were ordered to charge and clear the people out. Now, what offence had these people committed? Is it to be laid down as the law in Ireland that for the people to shake hands with a Member of Parliament is a punishable offence? I say, from the evidence of my own eyes, there was no other offence; there was no attempt to hold a meeting; there was not even a cheer. A cheer, we know, is a serious offence; and one man raising a cheer may be subjected to a baton charge and a broken head. I stood before the police and called out, "What is it you want the people to do? Tell me and I will get them to do it. Are they to be bludgeoned because they shake hands with me?" Now, I attribute it not to my appeal, but to the fact that 20 dragoons were looking on that the Magistrate said, "Well, men, put up your batons and shove them out of that." Now, I ask why, on what ground do Magistrates, entrusted with the delicate duty of preserving the peace, behave in this way? We, whatever our sins may be, are trusted by the people. We may be scoundrels of the deepest dye, but we have more power over the people than you have. Is this the way to preserve the peace, to incite to tumult by insulting every Irish Member who comes among the people? I will give another instance to show the spirit prevailing. After we got into the hotel, Mr. O'Brien went to the telegraph office at the other end of the town to send off a message, and immediately he was followed by 10 dragoons and about 40 policemen in charge of a Magistrate. I, looking out, felt some amusement at the proceeding, and determined to see the result, and followed my hon Friend. Thereupon, my Magistrate—I say my Magistrate, and I mean the Magistrate specially interesting himself in my movements—and a force of police and dragoons escorted me, and so we had a double procession down the street. We reached the telegraph office, and while we were inside, the imposing force of police and military formed a hollow square in front to prevent an address being delivered from the steps of the house, a thing we had not the slightest intention of doing. Mr. O'Brien went up the street, and I returned to the hotel escorted as before. In the street, at corners and along the walls of the houses, ready to bolt into the houses, a few people were scattered; and, as I passed, these people raised a feeble cheer. Without any warning a charge was ordered by Mr. Shannon. Now, what offence was committed? The people ought to be warned that they are not allowed to shake hands, to cheer Members of Parliament, or to groan for Mr. Balfour on pain of having their heads broken on the spot. If any persons, men or women, venture to groan, they are rushed upon and batoned at once; and it is laid down by the police themselves that this is unquestionably an offence. In this case the charge was ordered for the offence of an isolated handful of people. I turned to the Magistrate and said, "Will you be kind enough to inform me what it is you want the people to abstain from doing, and I will tell them and obtain their acquiescence?" And the Magistrate replied, "I will give you no information." I then asked, "Do you decline to give me the information which will enable me to aid you in preserving the peace?" And the Magistrate replied, "That is accurate." He said this in a manner which was grossly offensive. On these facts the following questions arise: First, is it legal to attack a peaceable meeting, even although it has been proclaimed, without due warning sufficient to allow the people to disperse? Secondly, when no attempt has been made to hold a meeting, is it legal to charge and baton small groups of people who are doing nothing but cheering or shaking hands with Members of Parliament? Thirdly, when a crowd of people is charged by the police, when no resistance is offered and people fly as quickly as they can, is it lawful to pursue them, to knock them down, and to baton them? The Executive Government are bound, if they have any degree of care for the peace of the country, or any regard for their own position, to give specific answers to these questions — definite answers that will act as a check upon their officials in Ireland. The unhappy people of Ireland live under conditions which it is almost impossible for the people of England to realise; under a centralised police system such as the English people had never come in contact with, a system so allied with the Magistracy that the people have no hope of remedy in the Courts of Law. This House is the only place to which the people of Tipperary can look for any remedy, and it is because they hope to receive a considerable amount of sympathy and support from a large Party in this House that we do not now hear of those serious and violent outrages which used to be so frequent in Ireland. I now have a word or two to say in regard to the so-called explosives. The *Times*, evidently determined to keep up its reputation for veracity, speaks of bombs exploded amongst the police for the purpose of clearing a way through them. This is childish nonsense. Let the Chief Secretary produce a single policeman who has received a scratch. With the exception of one or two attempts to injure buildings, which were made a long time before meetings were addressed by English Members of Parliament, there has been no use at all of what could be properly described as explosives. What have been used were mere crackers or squibs, which produced a report something like that of a pistol-shot, made of short lengths of gaspipe with a little powder in them, made and thrown for the purpose of creating alarm, by mischievous boys over whom politicians could exercise no control whatever. The police have been good enough to show their museum of explosives to Mr. Byles, of the *Bradford Observer*, who found that six out of 10 were short lengths of gaspipe, whilst the seventh was a champagne bottle, and the most serious of all was the hub of a wheel which had been exploded in a a narrow street and had brought down some guttering. The tenants knew nothing about these things, which are only such explosives as are let off by boys in the streets of New York every Fourth of July; and that the storm about them was a *ridiculus mus* is shown by the fact that the Dublin *Daily Express* concluded its description of a canister that had contained gunpowder by saying that—

> "Of course no danger could accrue from the explosion, but it is evident that it was placed there for the purpose of alarming and causing annoyance to the police."

By the very testimony of avowed enemies no harm was intended. A more serious matter is the intolerable practice, continued from day to day, of "shadowing" Members of Parliament. I, Sir, have had an unfortunate experience of being shadowed by the police, and I remember having met in Australia a man who had been engaged in this kind of duty, but who is now happily converted. He described to me the whole process of shadowing a Member of Parliament, and the process is this: The Member is watched from a distance by two or three men employed on this particular duty. They take note of every person who speaks to him or to whom he himself may speak. They watch every house he goes into, and take down the number of people in that house, or who enter it while he is there. That is the system which is being pursued in Ireland. I think it is a very odious system, but it is one that has been followed in Ireland for many years. The present Government have, in point of fact, invented a system of shadowing which, I venture to think, is not equalled by anything which takes place in Russia. We had a conversation the other day as to some words uttered by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, which had been grossly diverted from their true meaning. The right hon. Gentleman was sneered and scoffed at for saying what he did not say with regard to the condition of things in Ireland, as comparable to what is taking place in Siberia. But I do not hesitate to say that we have in Ireland a state of things which, if they were described as taking place in Odessa or St. Petersburg, would raise a howl throughout this country. Well, what have you done in Ireland? In Tipperary, the parish priest cannot leave his home without being "shadowed" by two officers, one of whom walks by his side and the other close behind him, and insists upon hearing the conversation between the priest and anyone he speaks to in the street. This infamous and unparaleled process is inflicted on the mere *ipse dixit* of the incompetent, insolent, and most objectionable Magistrate who has been sent down to take charge of the district. Mr. Caddell is inexperienced and incompetent, and yet anybody can be subjected to this intolerable system on Mr. Caddell's mere suspicion. Not every one could submit to such persecution all day long without losing their temper; it is not in human nature to stand such a system. The public peace is daily and hourly put in danger, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary is responsible for whatever does occur. There was a case brought before Mr. Caddell where a policeman was charged with assaulting a civilian. Three respectable witnesses swore to the assault, which the policeman denied. Though the policeman's evidence was unsupported, Mr. Caddell dismissed the summons, and fined the complainant £1 costs. Another case decided by Mr. Caddell was that of a man charged with assaulting his "shadow." He was a respectable farmer who had come into town, and was immediately shadowed by the police, and very shortly afterwards was arrested by his shadow on a charge of assault. He was brought before the same Mr. Caddell, and the charge was that he attempted to trip up the policeman and shove him off the path. Three independent witnesses swore that the alleged assault could not have been committed without their seeing it, and that they did not see it. When the case was before him Colonel Caddell said "Why were you following Mr. Hayes that day?" The complainant replied, "I believed he was on the street for the purpose of boycotting some shopmen." Whereupon Colonel Caddell said that the case was one in which he had very little doubt, as he had the sworn testimony of the constable that he had been tripped and nearly fell, and was shoved off the path by the defendant, of whom the police had stated they had information that he was a person taking part in the diabolical business of boycotting. Persons like the defendant, he added, were acting against the rescripts of their Church, and, therefore, he had no hesitation in convicting the defendant. I wish the House to mark this reference to boycotting, about which there never was a tittle of evidence given before the Court. Nevertheless, this gentleman has no hesitation in convicting a defendant against the sworn testimony of three respectable witnesses, because he thinks he was engaged in boycotting, when no such question was really before him. A more glaring instance could not be given of the way in which men like this are in the habit of dispensing justice in Ireland. Mr. Caddell evidently has no idea how to behave in a Court of Law. He is a daily and imminent danger to the peace of the district, where the police are drinking, and acting in the most irregular, undisciplined, and irresponsible fashion. They are encouraged in the belief that, whatever they may do, they will not be held responsible, and that their unsupported story will be accepted without any inquiry by the right hon. Gentleman. Although the Irish Members have used strong language with reference to the late Mr. Forster, and although they felt bound to stuggle against his administration, yet Mr. Forster was not the man who would have gone down to play lawn-tennis in a remote part of England when he had issued orders which, for aught the person who issued them knew or cared, might lead to results infinitely more disastrous and disgraceful than those which stained the square of Mitchelstown with blood. I forget where the right hon. Gentleman was when he heard of the Mitchelstown murders, but he might have been engaged in the same kind of thing, and I say that this is not the way in which the people of Ireland ought to be treated. While this state of things exists in Tipperary, while the police and the people do not speak to each other, there is no hope for the preservation of the law; and the responsibility for all these misfortunes and troubles lies on the head of the Executive, who encourage the police and the Magistrates to pursue these evil courses. The heavy duty lies on the House of securing that the police of Ireland shall not be encouraged to act in the horrible way I have described; that they shall not be taught that they have no responsibility to the people; and that they shall have those wholesome restraints imposed upon them which are applied in every other country of liberty. The police should be made to know that the men who speak in the fullest way the voice of the people of Ireland will at least be listened to when criticising the conduct of the police; and that when the police resort to violence, an inquiry will follow, at which civilian evidence will be listened to. Until that is done it is idle to hope that either the police or the Magistracy will be able to secure the confidence of the Irish people. I beg to move "That the House do now adjourn."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Dillon.*)

*(5.58.) THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has confined himself, for the most part, to an account in detail, which I shall have to traverse, of recent affairs in Tipperary, and he has indulged in none of those general attacks upon the Government which are familiar on occasions of this sort. He did, however, criticise my conduct in not having been present in Dublin at the time the meetings in Tipperary were held. I can only say that I took every possible precaution and made every arrangement for pro-

viding that there should be an adequate force of policemen on the spot—[An hon. MEMBER: Murder]—so that if any untoward event occurred at all events the responsibility should not rest upon my shoulders. The hon. Member drew a distinction between the attitude of the present Government and that of the right hon. Gentleman opposite some years ago.

MR. DILLON: I merely drew a distinction between the conduct of Mr. Forster, who attended personally in Dublin when a great crisis took place, and the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman apparently does not draw any distinction between the conduct of the present Government and the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and in that he is, I think, strictly in accordance with historical accuracy. Though I do not in the least wish to go back upon the unhappy incidents which occurred in Ireland between 1880 and 1885, I could, if it were worth while, read extracts from the contemporaneous criticisms of Nationalist Members—criticisms not cheered by the Liberal Party when they were sitting on this side of the House, precisely parallel to, though couched in more violent language than, the criticisms passed upon us and upon the police in Ireland by the hon. Gentleman to-night. Now, Sir, this question necessarily divides itself into two branches. In the first place, we have to ask whether the general arrangements of the Government for suppressing the meeting were prudent, and whether the police acted with judgment and moderation; and, in the second place, we have to inquire whether the Government were justified in proclaiming the meetings to be held in Tipperary and Cashel? The questions are entirely distinct. I deal with them in their order. The hon. Member for Mayo said that if we meant to proclaim the meeting at Tipperary we ought to have proclaimed it sooner. He said we had ample notice of the character of the meeting, and that, nevertheless, we did not post our placard till the day before the meeting was to be held. He further told us that the objects of the meeting were defined as being to welcome him and his Colleague the hon. Member for North-East Cork, and to hear addresses from the Members of Parliament for the county. On all these points the hon. Member is, I believe, in error. I recollect that in the Debate just before we separated for the Whitsuntide holidays much stress was laid by hon. Members from Ireland on the fact that we proposed to interfere with a meeting to be held by Members for the purpose of addressing their constituents. But there was not a word, as far as I am informed, in the placards posted in Tipperary about the Members for Tipperary or any other Members of Parliament except the two Members whom I have just alluded to. The placard, which was posted on Friday, May 23, was as follows:—

> "Great meeting at Tipperary on Sunday next, the 25th inst., Messrs. J. Dillon, M.P., and W. O'Brien, M.P., will deliver addresses."

[An hon. MEMBER: Is that all?] That is all, according to the copy of the placard which has been furnished to me, and if that be correct, as I believe it is, even the flimsy pretext of an address to constituents has been abandoned, and judiciously abandoned, by those who were responsible for the arrangements on that occasion. The hon. Gentleman says that long notice was given to us of the intention to hold the meeting, and that we gave no notice to him, to his Colleagues, or to the people of Tipperary, that we were going to stop it. As far as I can make out no placard was posted in Tipperary announcing the meeting until the Friday afternoon, at the earliest. Questions on the subject were put to me in this House on the Thursday by the hon. Member for West Belfast and the right hon Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, and I then made the following statement:—

> "I have no very full details of the objects of the meeting before me, but certainly if an open-air meeting is to be held in Tipperary in its present condition, and if inflammatory speeches are likely to be made, it would undoubtedly lead to intimidation, and any such meeting must be stopped."

That was very fair notice given on the Thursday, and more explicit notice still was given on the Friday. So much for the first accusation brought against the Government by the hon. Gentleman, that we, in accordance, as he wa good enough to say, with our habitual practice, had delayed proclaiming the meeting, in order, if possible, to provoke a conflict between the police and the people. Although it was known that no meeting would be permitted, nevertheless, knowing that, and knowing the character of the scenes which experience, and, unhappily, long experience, in Ireland, has shown attend these abortive attempts to hold proclaimed meetings, the hon. Gentleman and his Friends took upon themselves the grave responsibility, in the face of the proclamation, of engaging in a course of conduct which might have led, though happily it did not lead, to a serious, nay, a dangerous conflict between the police and the people. The hon. Gentleman has given us, in great detail, a narrative of the events in Tipperary and Cashel. I will frankly admit, and I dare say he expects, that the account I have received of these transactions differs vitally and fundamentally from that which he has thought it his duty to lay before the House. I am informed that the meeting at Limerick Junction did not exceed 300 or 400 persons, and that it consisted almost entirely of those who came by special train, with the addition of a few of the leaders of the hon. Gentleman's Party resident in Tipperary; and I think probably the police were well advised, in these circumstances, not to interfere with the meeting. Then the hon. Gentleman has given us an account of what happened to himself and his friends in Tipperary. Judging by what he states, it would seem that the police entertained themselves during the day in pursuing flying men, women, and children, into their shops and houses, that baton charges were resorted to without provocation, and that no attempts were made by the people to injure the police. According to the picture drawn by the hon. Gentleman the whole transaction consisted of the hon. Gentleman on one side attempting to preserve order, and the police on the other attempting to disturb it. Well, Sir, I do not think that picture has even the elements of plausibility about it. The hon. Gentleman must have been perfectly aware that his presence in Tipperary, under the circumstances, was the very worst way of keeping the peace and protecting the people that could well be devised. I do not believe that any baton charge took place unprovoked on that occasion. Stones were thrown at the police, and then they undoubtedly——

MR. DILLON: I understood it was customary in this House to accept an hon. Member's word. I stated that I was charged myself while standing with five Colleagues in conversation, and while we were doing nothing. Yet the right hon. Gentleman, without quoting any witness, deliberately gives me the lie across the floor of the House.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I gather from your not rising, Sir, that you are of opinion, as I think will be obvious to every man listening to me, that in giving my version of what I believe to be the facts I am contradicting the hon. Gentleman, but I am in no Parliamentary sense giving him the lie. I believe he has given to the House statements which he believes to be true. At all events, I am entitled to hold that opinion.

MR. DILLON: On a point of order. The right hon. Gentleman seems to be of opinion that he is entitled to say that what I have stated as an eye-witness he does not believe. I have only stated that which came under my own eyes; yet the right hon. Gentleman says he does not believe it, and quotes no evidence and no authority in support of his assertions.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman appears to me to put a curious construction upon that rule of courtesy which forbids one Member of the House to give the lie to another. I had not the slightest intention of doing so. I do not believe the hon. Member meant to mislead the House, although I do believe that, as a matter of fact, he has done so. There is nothing unparliamentary or offensive in saying that. I am but stating my own personal convictions, based upon such a study as I have been able to give to the subject. If that statement be in opposition to that of the hon. Gentleman, I want to know why I should be precluded from giving it to the House. The hon. Gentleman referred to a baton charge, as I understood him, when he and five other persons alone occupied the square in the Market Place at Tipperary. I have not the least doubt that the hon. Gentleman had no concern whatever in stone-throwing, but I believe I am right in saying that every charge of the police in Tipperary that day was provoked by some outrage of the character of stone-throwing. I desire to conduct this controversy with courtesy towards hon. Gentlemen opposite, but I am bound to state to the House what I believe to be the truth. The hon. Gentleman has given what he believes to be the truth.

Mr. DILLON: I know it to be the truth.

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: And when the whole case has been surveyed the House will be in a position to judge between us. We have had some sensational accounts given of police charges, in which it is said a woman was struck by a baton, and in which a cripple was knocked over the head by a policeman. I saw these statements in the newspaper, and I have done my best to inquire what foundation there is for them. There was a woman struck, not by the police, but by a stone thrown by the crowd, but as to the cripple I can find nothing whatever about him, and I believe him to be imaginary. I do not think the hon. Member gave us this statement as an eye witness. Then the hon. Gentleman gave us an account of what happened at Cashel in very much the same strain as his narrative of what happened at Tipperary. So far as I can make out, no meeting was held in Cashel itself. There was a meeting held at a place about 11 miles off, called Barrys-ford, and a meeting which was attempted to be held between that place and Cashel was at once dispersed. The hon. Gentleman has told us that the police charged before any provocation was given, but he is misinformed on a very material point.

Mr. DILLON: I was struck myself.

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I did not assert that the hon. Gentleman had not been struck. As I understand, the police did not charge till one of them had been struck with a blackthorn. The police were a small body, and they were quite right in taking the initiative; but there does not appear to have been on that occasion any serious injury inflicted on the crowd, nor, I am happy to say, on the hon. Gentleman himself. Then the hon. Gentleman was good enough to prophecy that my defence would chiefly rest upon the bombs, and he gave us an account of these bombs, which throws a strong light on the very peculiar condition of Tipperary.

Mr. DILLON: I said that I had gone into the museum in which the police had collected what they called the explosives which had been thrown in nine months, and of these there were only two which had been thrown since the month of April, and they were nearly all of a perfectly innocent character.

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: What I said was that in the course of the agitation conducted by the hon. Gentleman and his friends a practice had grown up of throwing bombs, or, as he is pleased to describe them, squibs; some of them of a character, according to the hon. Gentleman's own confession, capable of seriously injuring houses, and therefore presumably capable of injuring any person in them. I have looked at some of these interesting implements for securing the freedom of Ireland, and the most innocent of them can hardly be described as a squib. Any Member of this House—for instance, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, who should find himself in the position of having one of these interesting instruments thrown across his path by boys, if boys they were—would think that they were exceeding the licence usually allowed to boys in England or Scotland.

Mr. DILLON: Has any one been hurt?

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: So far as I know, nobody has been hurt. If the criterion of innocence in method be the absence of fatal results, I can point with satisfaction to the fact that in the transactions of Sunday and Tuesday last no one was seriously hurt, and claim, on the hon. Member's own showing, that the action of the police is not open to serious adverse criticism. But let me tell the House what these so-called squibs are. The most innocent of them were those thrown at the police on Sunday week last, and against which, so far as I know, no public remonstrance was offered by the hon. Gentleman or his friends.

Mr. DILLON: The right hon. Gentlemakes a direct charge against me. I had been driven off the square by a police charge, and I could not open my mouth. In the name of Heaven, how could I remonstrate in these circumstances? When I offered to keep the peace they would not allow me to do so.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman has declared he has great influence with the people, and is prepared to tell them what to do. These bombs were not thrown for the first time on Monday week, but three or four months ago, and I have heard no protest——

MR. DILLON rose.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member will pardon me. He has already interrupted me a good deal. I say these bombs were not thrown for the first time on Monday week. Upon the hon. Gentleman's own showing, some of them, and the most dangerous, were thrown many weeks, and some of them many months ago. Has any word of public remonstrance come at any period from any of the Irish Members as to the use of these weapons in Tipperary? The most innocent of them, those, namely, which were used on Monday week, and which were then thrown in the direction of the police, were composed of two or three inches of lead pipe fastened up at one end, filled with powder, and plugged at the other end. I do not say that these weapons would necessarily prove of a very destructive character, but I still think that very few Members of this House would regard with equanimity that the streets through which they had to pass were strewed with them. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!" "Strewed."] Hon. Members do not do me the honour to listen to what I say. I did not say Tipperary streets were strewed with such things; but if these are innocent things why should the streets not be strewed with them? As a matter of fact, I believe hon. Members would take a very different estimate of the character of these bombs were they the persons against whom the instruments were directed. But much more formidable weapons than these lead pipes have been used. I have seen another of these implements was the axle box of a cart wheel with the two ends closed by thick iron plates and screwed together with a long rivet. This was filled with powder, and a fuse was placed in it. The hon. Gentleman tells us that this was done with the object of injuring buildings, and not individuals. Was ever such an extraordinary excuse made for a diabolical outrage? This was placed at the rent office window of my hon. Friend the Member for South Hunts, and another instrument of a similar construction was put near to the house of a Mr. Fitzgerald, who had purchased the interest of his holding at a Sheriff's sale. The hon. Member admits that transactions of this kind have several times occurred, and yet he comes down here as a champion of the cause of law and order without having used the great influence which he possesses in Tipperary to prevent these things from being used.

MR. DILLON: I did; I spoke strongly against them.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Then as to shadowing. I do not think the practice of shadowing persons suspected of illegal proceedings can be an agreeable one, or upon which we in this House can look with any satisfaction; but which are we to prefer—shadowed criminals or committed crimes? There is no one who can point out any individual who has been subjected to this system of shadowing who is not concerned in the criminal offence of boycotting.

THE EARL OF CAVAN (Somerset, S.): I beg to say that a deputation that I sent over, consisting of three men who were perfectly innocent of boycotting, were shadowed all the time they were in Ireland.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I was never charged with boycotting, and yet I was shadowed all the time I was in Ireland.

*MR. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth): The right hon. Gentleman cannot say that about me, because he has admitted in this House that I was followed about.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think that I have misrepresented the hon. Gentleman opposite. The hon. Member for East Mayo drew a perfectly legitimate distinction between that observation by the police, which he truly says has long been found necessary in Ireland—

MR. DILLON: I do not say anything of the kind.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: And the system of shadowing of which he complained. Hon. Gentlemen who have interrupted me may have in some sense been under police observation, but they were not shadowed in the sense of which the hon. Member complains.

MR. CONYBEARE: I was.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The people who are shadowed in this way are those who make themselves responsible for cattle boycotting at fairs and other transactions of a similar character. I do not believe the hon. Member for Camborne (Mr. Conybeare) would be of the least use as an agent for cattle boycotting, and I am sure, therefore, that the police would not take the slightest notice of him. Now, I should like the House to consider who are on their trial in this Debate. [*Opposition cheers, and cries of* "You are."] The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down and hon. Members behind him, who so vociferously cheered my question, are clearly of opinion that Her Majesty's Government are on their trial. I do not take that view. In my opinion, when the responsible Government of the day has proclaimed a meeting, it may and ought to be asked on what grounds they did so; but I do not think that any man, be he who he may, knowing the results that must follow from his action, is justified in doing at Tipperary and at Cashel what the hon. Member for East Mayo and his friends have done. If there has been any violence consequent upon their operations, they are to blame, and not the Government. It is impossible to disperse a crowd without some degree of violence; but I do not believe that the degree of violence used at Tipperary and Cashel was excessive. Though we have heard vague statements about injuries received by this man and that man in the crowd, and while the estimate of the number of wounded persons has been put at 43, I cannot discover that any serious injury has been inflicted by the police upon any human being, except, perhaps, in the case of the boy Heffernan. I believe the most serious injuries that have occurred during these troubled months in Tipperary have been injuries inflicted, not by the police on the people but by the people on the police. I have seen it stated in an article in the *Speaker*, written by some felicitous imitator of the style of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), that no police were injured. [An hon. MEMBER: He signed the article.] Did he? Well, if he did make that statement he made it under grave misapprehension, because I am informed that two policemen have been so seriously injured that they have had to leave the Force, and have received as compensation £300 and £500 respectively, awarded by the Grand Jury. ["They were bogus cases."] The cases came before the Grand Jury. ["When?"] Since these transactions occurred. I believe that no injuries were inflicted upon any one of the people comparable with those injuries, and I think that there is no evidence that those inflicted in the case of last Sunday week and Tuesday week were in any way of a serious character. Now I come to what I think a more important question than the action of the police; I come to the action of the Government. Was the Government justified, or was it not, in the course which it took in proclaiming this meeting? The hon. Member for East Mayo is under a grave misapprehension as to the law under which we act in Ireland. The law under which our action is taken is precisely the same as the law in England, and under that law, as I fully admit, a meeting is not rendered illegal by the proclamation of the Government. It was rendered illegal under the Coercion Act of 1882, but, under the Crimes Act now in operation, it is not in the power of the Government to make a meeting illegal by its mere *fiat*; but what the Government can do by its *fiat* is to throw grave responsibility upon those who, in the face of such a proclamation, persist in holding a meeting. A meeting is rendered illegal by the circumstances which surround it. If it is likely to lead to intimidation or boycotting, outrage, or crime of any sort, the meeting is, *ipso facto*, an illegal meeting. Does the hon. Member, or do any of his friends, deny that the meeting which he and his friends attempted or desired to hold last Sunday week was not an illegal meeting under the definition which I have given? Some parallel has been attempted to be drawn between the meeting which was proclaimed and the meeting which was permitted a month or two before. I admit that, in the then circumstances at Tipperary, it may be doubtful, and it was doubtful, whether we should have allowed even the banquet of April 10 to take place; but, on the whole, we decided that, taking into account the circumstances of the case, it was permissible. But those circumstances were perfectly different from the circumstances of Sunday week. The programme of the meeting in the case of the banquet was made public, and the managers were approached by the authorities and told that if the programme was not departed from they might hold the meeting. There is an account of the order of proceedings in the *Freeman's Journal* of April 10, stating that the hon. Members would arrive in such and such a way, and there would be a luncheon, a dinner, the reading of some original poetry by the hon. Member for Dublin, and so on—the usual thing. There was nothing serious in the programme. I have been asked whether the fact that English Members were to be present had any influence upon me. It had great influence upon me: I do not in the least degree deny it. I know that hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway are on their best behaviour before English Members; I know that they would be reluctant to make those speeches, which I am justified in calling criminal speeches, which they have too often made in Ireland—speeches which produce the consequences in Tipperary and elsewhere which we so much deplore. We know, also, what kind of things these public banquets are. One gentleman gets up and congratulates another upon all the great things he has done, and the other gentleman then gets up and returns all the compliments with interest. I have taken part in these things myself. They are all the same; a great deal of champagne is drunk, and a great many speeches—some bad some good—are made without any serious consequences occurring to any one. Now, compare that with the meeting announced to be held the other day. The time chosen was a period when the tenants of the hon. Member for South Hunts (Mr. Smith-Barry) had to redeem or lose their right to redeem. It was known perfectly well that they desired to redeem; it was regarded as essential to the Nationalist cause that they should not redeem; it was thought that the patriotism with which they had been credited for making sacrifices to the National cause would be the better for receiving a jog in the shape of a great demonstration held among them, presided over by the two Members of this House who, more than any others, are responsible for the Plan of Campaign and boycotting. Was that to be tolerated by any responsible Government? Those who say that it was must, I think, be in ignorance of the state to which the policy of hon. Members has reduced Tipperary since September last. Since that time Tipperary has been given up to a mob, who were the instruments for carrying out the policy of intimidation to which too many of these unfortunate shopkeepers have had to succumb. Boycotting was rife throughout the town; crime of all sorts had largely increased. On this point I have been challenged by the hon. Member opposite in the course of his speech. Before the recess, I gave the figures for the last four months of last year, as compared with the figures of the last four months of the two preceding years. The House will recollect that in 1887 the total of crimes of drunkenness and assault and other crimes affecting the public peace amounted to 143. In 1888 the number was 162, while in 1889 it rose to 269, so that in the two years preceding last year the total of the four months but little exceeded the number for the corresponding four months of one year under the *régime* of hon. Members opposite. I was challenged whether I would continue these figures. I said I would make inquiry. I have made inquiry, and I find that during the first four months of 1888 the figures were 118. In the first four months of 1889 they were 110, while in the first four months of 1890 they rose to 258. So that there has been, as I have said, a startling increase of crime.

MR. DILLON: What class of crime?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Drunkenness, assaults, and other crimes affecting the public peace—showing that concurrently with this attempt at mob rule, this system of boycotting and intimidation, these outrages with explosives, we have a general increase of other crimes connected with the public peace. That is a matter which should be carefully considered by hon. Gentlemen when they consider the action of the Government. They must remember that the houses of those persons who attempted to redeem were wrecked by the mob. I stated before that a Member of this House had boasted that these things had occurred. I believe he controverts the fact—he has stated in the *Freeman's Journal* that he never made any speech of the kind. What he did, or what he was reported to have done in a newspaper the editor of which is, I understand, a personal friend of his, was to give to the reporter of the newspaper the account which I quoted accurately. In addition to the wrecking of houses we have had the destruction of goods sold by a boycotted shopkeeper. If a boycotted shopkeeper is fortunate enough to find a customer the customer has to send the goods back or have them destroyed by being publicly burnt. We have had riots and assaults, and only the other day the family of a Protestant minister who had lived in Tipperary in peace with his neighbours for many years was attacked by some ruffians whom, unfortunately, we have not been able to identify. These are the methods by which the people of Tipperary are "brought into line." These are the methods by which they are induced to present a united front to my hon. Friend the Member for South Hunts. If anybody desires to know what the methods of Irish agitation are, let them go to Tipperary—[*Opposition cheers, and an* IRISH MEMBER: Let them go, and welcome]—and study, as they easily may—[*Opposition cheers, and a* VOICE: It is above board.]

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: And study the action which, under inspiration from hon. Gentlemen, has made that town a disgrace to civilisation in order to carry out political objects or satisfy the personal ambition of some gentlemen who regard themselves as leaders of their people. A quarrel has been picked with a man who, by the admission of his own tenants, is one of the best landlords in Ireland, and the result of that quarrel is that demoralisation has spread over the whole community. Desolation will undoubtedly follow the crime. I do not think that hon. Gentlemen will succeed in ruining the hon. Member for South Hunts, but I think it is more than possible they will succeed in ruining Tipperary. [An hon. MEMBER: Come and try it.] It is because we have these facts in view, because we have surveyed the whole course of this controversy, because we observe that intimidation dogs the heels of the agitators of the Irish Party, that we thought that, when they went down to Tipperary and declared their intention of holding a demonstration at this critical period, we should be cowards, and utterly unworthy of carrying out the duties with which we are entrusted if we had refrained from proclaiming it, and from effectually preventing it being held.

(6.51.) MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I have no doubt that this Debate will proceed to some considerable length from the grave nature of the matters which have been laid before the House; but I have no hesitation in asking to intervene at this time, because I think we have reached ground that is perfectly clear and definite. We have heard the able statement of the hon. Member for Mayo (Mr. Dillon). I have no doubt the case he stated will be supported by his friends who were eyewitnesses, but I assume that the substantial matters in the case have been produced in the speech of the hon. Member. In that speech, I observed, he commenced by taking objection in mild terms to the Proclamation issued by the Government against certain meetings in Ireland; but everyone who heard him must have seen that his charge on that ground was perfectly secondary. It was not upon that that he made his principal appeal either to the understanding or the feelings of the House. But we are in this predicament, that while the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) has made a careful, detailed, argumentative reply on the part of the Government to the impeachment of their conduct as to the issuing of the Proclamation, to the more grave and serious portions of the charges on which the hon. Member laid stress, as the gist and bulk of his complaint, the right hon. Gentleman has not referred at all. I have no doubt the right hon. Gentleman thinks he has made a reply, and I do not consider that the assertion I make is to be accepted without proof. I think it is very easy to show by reference to the particulars that the proof will be forthcoming. I do not intend to detain the House at any length, and I will mention at once the course I should recommend to the hon. Member and his friends to pursue. In my opinion, the allegations made by the hon. Member are of the gravest nature. The Government no doubt dispute those allegations and think they have met them. In my opinion, they have not been met at all. The matters are of such gravity that, in my opinion, we cannot leave them suspended in the air between the strong, broad, numerous, pointed, and definite statements of the hon. Member, and the vague, thin, irrelevant, general, intangible statements made by the right hon. Gentleman. It appears to me that we cannot allow this subject to pass by with the charge and the reply. It deserves, it requires, and it ought to command a public inquiry. Hon. Gentlemen are quite competent to judge of their own course, but that is the course I should recommend and suggest to them. If they make such a proposal it shall have my support, and I believe it will receive the support of all those with whom I have the honour to act. Three questions were put to the Chief Secretary, of which he has taken no notice whatever The first of them was this: the hon. Member alleged that the meeting was dispersed with no sort of notice. Is it right that public meetings should be attacked with no sort of notice and with no warning to the people? Is that the value we set on the right of public meeting? I say that no meeting could be dispersed in England without notice given.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I said that the meeting was proclaimed by a notice put up on the Saturday. Everybody knew of the notice.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: That is not it. I do not mean that; I mean notice at the time the meeting was dispersed. The position I lay down is that it is not right, I believe it is not legal, I am certain it is not customary, I am confident also it is fatal to public liberty, if public assemblies not engaged in acts that involve violence and breach of the peace are to be dispersed by the use of violent means, without previous notice to them that they ought to disperse and that it is the intention of the agents of the law to disperse them. The right hon. Gentleman made no statement whatever on that point showing whether notice was given. He said nothing which would lead us to believe that notice was to be given, or to allow us to assume that in future notice will be given. The second question was whether it was right that parties of police should charge with their batons upon small and peaceable groups of persons—upon groups such as that in which the hon. Member himself stood, upon groups of women and children. As to the group in which he stood, the hon. Member made a clear, striking, significant and definite statement; and what was the answer of the right hon. Gentleman? I accept his statement that he had no intention of giving the lie to the hon. Member for Mayo. He made this vague and general answer. First of all he tried to trap him into a statement which he had not made, and then he said he did not believe there was on that occasion any batoning at all, except in answer to the stone-throwing at the police. Where were those stones thrown at the police if not from the group of which the hon. Member formed a part? Were there any stones thrown at the time of the charges and the batoning? Has the right hon. Gentleman ventured upon a single definite allegation? No. It is a general presumption that he entertains, and he apparently believes it to to be his duty to have absolute faith in his agents in Ireland, and I am sorry to see that they are endeavouring to copy the spirit of many of the right hon. Gentleman's own speeches. No answer has been given to this definite statement of an hon. Member's personal experience. The right hon. Gentleman says that he does not believe, and, so far as he is informed, he does not know, that there was any charge by batons by the police except when stones were thrown.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: When the hon. Member accused me of having given him the lie, what I did was to contradict him precisely and categorically.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Now we will see how the matter stands. We must endeavour to draw the right hon. Gentleman out of the darkness. The hon. Member for Mayo says that he was standing in a group of six or seven persons, with, I think, five Parliamentary Colleagues and a priest, when an order was given to the police first to draw their batons and then to charge the group.

That statement the right hon. Gentleman says he categorically denies.

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: Then we must go to a Committee to see what is the truth. I do not want to fasten upon the right hon. Gentleman more than he is responsible for, but I now understand him to say that from some hallucination or other, the very precise statement of facts made by the hon. Member for Mayo is not true, that the hon. Member was not the object of an attack by the police, who were first ordered to draw their batons and then to charge the group of six or seven persons. That is categorically denied by the right hon. Gentleman.

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: What is categorically denied is that the charge in question was made by the police upon the hon. Member.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I must say that the interpretation that I put upon the very clear statement of the hon. Member for Mayo was this, that whatever may have been the intention—I do not say ferocious intention, but certainly violent and an intemperate intention—of the person who gave the order, there was humanity and compunction on the part of the police—that, in fact, the police did not give full effect to their orders and did not charge.

Mr. DILLON: They did charge, and passed clean through us, with batons drawn; but the humanity of the police was greater than that of their officers; for, when they came abreast of us, they broke rank and passed us without batoning us, and re-formed on the other side. While the police were charging, their officers kept shouting, "Close your ranks and drive them before you."

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: Upon a matter affecting his personal experience as to what came within his own view and almost within his arm's length, an hon. Member receives a categorical denial. Is it possible, in these circumstances, to refuse a Parliamentary inquiry? Nor was that the only case of batoning mentioned by the hon. Member. The hon. Member gave in careful detail no fewer than four instances in which batons were drawn and charges were made. And then, upon these facts, the hon. Member raised three general questions which have not received an answer. The first question was, Are meetings to be dispersed by violence without any notice or invitation to the people to disperse? The second question is, Is it right that the police should be ordered to draw their batons and to charge groups of six or seven individuals engaged in no communication with others, or in anything that bears the semblance of an illegal act—groups incapable of violence, and consisting in some instances almost entirely of women and children? And there is the third question, Is it right, when a charge has been made, and when the people are running and are overtaken in escaping from the meeting, that they should be knocked down by the police and vindictively punished? To none of these questions has an answer been given. The third question is as important as the others, but I cannot overrate the importance of every one of them. I cannot conceive what is a case for inquiry if this is not. What says the right hon. Gentleman? He says that we ought not to take any notice of this case, because no one has been seriously injured. Sir, I say that the liberties of this country are to be vindicated when the exercise of those liberties is interfered with, even if you cannot prove that serious injury has taken place. But, what is meant by serious injury? I say that heads broken by the batons of the police are very serious affairs. It is idle to talk of maintaining law and order if you make light of such matters. The whole tendency of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman on any of the points on which any reply has been made has been to exhibit the Government of the Queen and the agents of the Queen in Ireland as the principal upholders of law and order. Is it possible to conceive a graver issue for inquiry? The Chief Secretary says that the hon. Member for Mayo is upon his trial. I agree with him. Unquestionably that is so. If the hon. Member has deceived the House upon a statement of fact, the character and honour which the hon. Member has always maintained intact, and which he values, I apprehend, as much as any Member of this House, would grievously suffer. The right hon. Gentleman opposite says that he thinks that the principal injuries have been those inflicted upon the police. How does he show that?

He shows it by stating that two policemen have been obliged to leave the force, and have received compensation from the Grand Juries of £300 and £500. But when were those injuries inflicted? We are speaking now of the treatment of the people at Tipperary and Cashel a fortnight ago, and the right hon. Gentleman says that these policemen retired at some period, which he thinks was last September. What has that to do with the proceedings at Tipperary and Cashel a fortnight ago? I must say that I do not pretend to enter upon the question on which the right hon. Gentleman based the principal part of his speech—whether the proclnmation issued by the Irish Government deserves the approval or the censure of the House. That is a large and difficult question. If Ireland were being governed under laws breathing the spirit of freedom I should have no difficulty in condemning that proclamation. But when I consider what is the spirit of the Coercion Act of 1887 I feel that the Government are justified in drawing from such an Act rather large conclusions. Until I have more information on the subject I will not undertake to say whether the Government, in issuing the proclamation, have acted beyond the spirit of the Coercion Act, or merely in accordance with the spirit of that Act. As I have said, this is the main question before the House. An accusation has been made upon one set of questions, and a defence has been made upon another set of questions. I do not say that we are to draw irrevocable conclusions from these matters. I think that the right hon. Gentleman ought to have an opportunity of producing witnesses. My position is this. This is a case in which the strongest and the most imperative grounds have been made out for an inquiry. And now let me say one word about the system of espionage known as "shadowing." We have, first of all, the assertion, which is, at any rate, tacitly admitted even in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, that a certain system of espionage, conducted with a certain amount of consideration and regard to decency, has long been in force in Ireland. But that is not the invention of the present Government. A new system has been introduced under the name of "shadowing." Under that system of espionage a gentleman walking peaceably in the street has a policeman in plain clothes placed beside him, shoulder to shoulder.

MR. DILLON: In uniform.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I meant in uniform, for that is a very large part of the charge. The policeman marches along with the gentleman wherever he goes, and whoever he accosts that policeman is the confidant of his conversation —conversation that the policeman has to report to a Resident Magistrate, under whose orders he is performing executive duties, and if a prosecution arises it is likely that the Resident Magistrate will hear the case. I must say on this state of things that, in my opinion, it is impossible to conceive a system of more outrageous tyranny combined with Constitutional freedom. I appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite whether there is one of them who would endure it. Is there any man in this House—even the feeblest—who would not use such means as Nature has given him to put an end to such abominable outrages, which are all the worse because they are inflicted in the name of law? What was the answer of the right hon. Gentleman? He asked, Which is the greater evil—to watch a criminal or to allow the commission of crime? Observe, that because some police officer suspects that somebody may have an intention of committing one of those offences which have been made crime by your legislation, on that account he is to be watched as a criminal and to be described as a criminal in this House. The priest of the parish is one of the gentlemen thus shadowed —he is accompanied by the police shoulder to shoulder along the footpath. There are not words strong enough to describe such abominations. Is there a single man sitting on the Benches behind the Chief Secretary who will get up and defend this new-fangled system of shadowing—an invention of the present Government and a symbol of firm government in Ireland? I think too well of them to believe they will take upon themselves the responsibility of such a defence. Knowing these things as we now know them, if the hon. Members for Cork and Mayo and the other Representatives of Ireland make a demand for inquiry, I ca not for a moment believe the first Lord of the

Treasury will refuse a serious and responsible inquiry by a Committee of this House into the allegations of the Mover of the Motion and the defence made on the part of the Government.

(7.18.) MR. W. O'BRIEN (Cork Co., N.E.): The right hon. Gentleman has made an unanswerable reply to the speech of the Chief Secretary, and because it is unanswerable it remains unanswered from the Treasury Bench. We on these Benches most cordially re-echo that reply. If the Chief Secretary has the courage of his convictions, if he believes the horrid imputations he has thrown upon the people of Tipperary, now is his chance. He asked Englishmen to go to Tipperary if they wanted to study the methods of the Irish Government. We say yes. We ask him to send, not a stranger, not an individual, but a Select Committee of this House to Tipperary. The Chief Secretary says he has received accounts of these transactions fundamentally different from those of the Irish Members. The issue is whether it is the officials who are lying or the Irish Members. We invite and we challenge you to have the question probed to the bottom by a full public investigation, and let the English people see just once for all on which side is the truth and on which side is the lying and blackguardism. There are two great dangers to the public peace in Ireland. One is the conduct of the police on such occasions as that in question; and the other, and the far greater danger, is the delivery by the Chief Secretary of speeches such as that he has just made. The recklessness of statement exhibited by the right hon. Gentleman in the House of Commons is the main cause of the recklessness and ruffianism of his subordinates in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman wants Englishmen to go to Ireland. Oh, yes, but while they are there, the police are on their best behaviour. It is idle for the right hon. Gentleman to object to inquiry by saying there are no matters of fact in dispute. Was there, or was there not, on the 12th of April an open public meeting in the town of Tipperary, attended by thousands, addressed by eight Members of Parliament, and attended also by two English Members? According to the Chief Secretary, up to this hour it is still in doubt whether all this is imaginary, like the batoning by the police of the poor cripple, whom I myself saw, and whom many of my friends beside me saw, batoned by the police. After to-night's Debate, at all events, he can be in no doubt that there are some matters of fact in dispute between us. Let the Government enable the English people, once for all, to ascertain the truth of this matter by some tribunal of a less absurd character than one in which Colonel Caddell, the Magistrate, passes judgment upon the conduct of Colonel Caddell, the policeman—the Lord High Chancellor of Tittipoo passes judgment upon the Lord High Executioner. On dozens of points we are prepared to prove that the statements put into the right hon. Gentleman's mouth are either misleading half-truths, or are unvarnished, unadulterated falsehoods. Let me give one instance. While the right hon. Gentleman speaks of there being 400 people at Limerick Junction, even the *Times* gives the number as 2,000. We traverse also, as a simple unadulterated lie, the information supplied to the right hon. Gentleman that no baton charges were made in Tipperary that day. I have friends by me who were present on the occasion, and I can speak of the meeting I was myself addressing. The policemen came up at a gallop, and, without a stone being thrown, without any provocation beyond that of cheering, the police rushed like maniacs upon the unfortunate people. Although this was witnessed by several Members of the House, we are to be told it was all purely imaginary. Let me deal now with the Chief Secretary's references to the all-important portion of my right hon. Friend's indictment. It is practically undisputed that at the Limerick Junction meeting a handful of police were for over an hour absolutely at the mercy of the meeting, which the *Times* estimated at 2,000 people, and not a single hair on a policeman's head was injured. In Tipperary town, an hour afterwards, the police were in overwhelming force. Did they use their strength as the people at Limerick Junction used theirs? No, they instantly and savagely attacked the people, right, left, and centre—people who were doing nothing except cheering. The same thing happened at Boherlahan, and again there were the same results. At Cashel the same thing happened. Again, at the first, the people were the stronger, and not one policeman was hurt; but the moment the police were reinforced they attacked the people. There was no disorder, violence, or injury while the people had the police at their mercy. What follows? The Government have instituted, I believe, 44 prosecutions against the men who were wantonly and brutally assaulted that day. They are prosecuting the rank and file, but up to the present moment they have not thought proper to grapple at all with the Members of Parliament who were responsible for the meeting, and that is the sort of thing that Lord Salisbury tells you is to go on in Ireland for 20 years. That is your brave and resolute Government. We have heard to-night something of the melancholy system of shadowing. I defy any impartial tribunal to study the statistics of Tipperary without coming to the conclusion that the police and the Removable Magistrates are acting with the deliberate intention of goading the people into a breach of the peace, because neither by fair means nor foul have they been able to smash their meetings up. I despair of giving any idea of the miserable petty police espionage that is exercised every day in Ireland. I do not speak particularly of these special occasions, although the conduct of the police at Cashel has been horrible and cowardly; but the far and away worse is the system of persecution which is exercised daily upon local men and local leaders. There is the case of Father Humphreys, one of the most revered and respected priests in Ireland. The picture of Father Humphreys alone passing through the streets, with a policeman in uniform on either side of him, and another at his heel, like a burglar in custody, would alone raise the gorge of any Englishman who could see it. Let me tell you what a mean, cowardly, tyrannical system it is. Upon the day my hon. Friend the Member for North Monaghan and myself were in Tipperary a man crossed the street and suddenly stood in front of Father Humphreys with a detective camera, and took his photograph. I afterwards joined him and went for a walk with him down the main street of Tipperary. The two policemen who attached themselves to us attempted to do the very same thing with us both. I asked if they had orders? I wanted to fight the question out, as they were not allowed to molest us. What did they do? The Head Constable behind cried out, "Fall back," and the policeman after my threat did fall back, and did not molest me again the whole time. Did they resume their march by the side of Father Humphreys? No, they knew that this photograph was taken, and that it would be seen throughout England. My hon. Friend the Member for Manchester several times raised the question in the House of the treatment of Father Humphreys, and it has been defended and championed by the Chief Secretary for Ireland. But the camera did what the Chief Secretary's conscience did not do. I had a letter from Father Humphreys a few days ago stating that the shadowing system had been dropped, but they continue it in the case of humbler men, of most respectable men, in Ireland, everyone as respectable as myself or the right hon. Gentleman himself. The police dog them from morn to night, and listen to what they say. They jostle them, make most offensive remarks to them, and do all that men can do to inveigle them into doing something to give them a pretext for a charge of assault, so as to throw them into gaol. Now that is the system of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in Ireland. The police yield when they must, and when England is looking, but when nobody is looking on the persecution goes on as before. The right hon. Gentleman has been beaten in the prosecution of the leaders, and is now engaged in the still more dastardly, and I venture to say equally futile, policy of persecuting their followers. The Irish police are being used as tools, and we, their countrymen, are driven with shame and anguish to recognise the condition to which they are falling. It is not they we blame, it is you (the Government). You have driven the Irish policeman to distinguish himself by hatred of his fellow-countrymen. The consequence is a fatal demoralisation of the Force which is simply incredible. The cowardice of the conduct of the police was really pitiful that day. They made three wretched attempts to suppress the meeting. They were put back with no single injury, and were obliged to yield. The moment the cavalry came up they made the brutal charge which has been described. The people had spared them when their lives were in their hands; but I never saw anything more horrible than the conduct of the force in return. They were literally growling like wild animals in a cage, muttering threats and using filthy language. Directly people attempted to raise a cheer they were attacked by infuriated policemen, who bludgeoned men right and left. The savage section of the force have got the upper hand. They are too strong even for their own officers—they hunger for promotion, and they know it can be got in no other way than this. I believe that our people are the most enduring people in the world; and unless their hearts were buoyed up with unshakeable confidence in the British people, I tell you that your Irish officials would long ago have maddened our people into some desperate acts of violence. The right hon. Gentleman had the courage to go back on the miserable story of the explosives in Tipperary. Two exploded while my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo was speaking to the police, and if they could have done any injury to anyone they would have injured him. There is in Tipperary as old a custom as that of exploding squibs in England on Guy Fawkes Day. It is a harmless stupid custom. I remember it myself in Tipperary for 20 years. I defy anybody to point to any injury resulting from it; and if you referred this matter to a Select Committee, you would find the story of the bombs to be as ridiculous as Serjeant Buzfuz's explanation of the famous "chops and tomatoes" in the Pickwick breach of promise case. The Irish people can no longer be blinded to the fact that while we can point to murder after murder committed by the police in Ireland, they cannot, on the other hand, point to a single policeman (except the unfortunate Inspector Martin, who lost his life through his own folly), who has been killed there for years past. The right hon. Gentleman has trotted out again his miserable statistics of drunkenness in Tipperary, contributed largely to, of course, by the Emergencymen. Why does he quote statistics of drunkenness? He has nothing else to depend upon. Where can he point to one single policeman in the whole County of Tipperary who has lost his life or limbs? Where is his list of killed and wounded? In the 10 years preceding the Land League agitation there were 18 landlords and agents shot dead. In all the years that followed the Land League there was not a single landlord or agent or policeman shot. Not one. They can quote no other outrage than the one I deplore, and which took place in an empty house eight months ago when we were in gaol. That we deplored and described as a piece of blackguardism. In all that time there has been no single outrage of any sort or kind. The Chief Secretary blows hot and cold. One moment he declares that there is no crime in Ireland, and then he says that Tipperary is given up to the mob—that it has become a disgrace to civilisation; that he is obliged to have 150 policemen and 700 soldiers to take care of it. If there is legitimate boycotting—and I say there is—the people of Tipperary claim the right the people of England have to choose their own interests and to deal with their own friends; and all I can say is that they have done it, and will continue to do it, and you will be just as powerless in the end as you were in the beginning. In what you are doing you are fighting against the instincts of a whole community and against the instincts of human nature itself. This is not a question of enthusiasm for law and order. The hon. Member for South Hunts has got his town. He has got his land and his houses without a single act of resistance to the law. He can have the remainder as soon as he wants it. But still he is not happy, and his advisers and backers in Dublin Castle are not happy. They know that their united force fails utterly to stay by one hair's breadth the tenants' combination. Let the Government submit this whole question in its entirety to a Select Committee, for we believe that if the whole truth were fully known the people of England, instead of being shocked, would say that never in the history of the world had there been in the face of so much provocation so much forbearance and unselfishness as the Irish people had shown. It is our business to court inquiry. Englishmen would be horrified at the length to which policemen and Magistrates go in Ireland, and the recklessness and criminality with which they used their weapons when there was no shadow of danger to them, and it is made a thousand times worse by speeches like that of the Chief Secretary. We invite this investigation. It would strengthen our cause. We bring these things forward because we are determined to bring them into the light, and to condemn the Government in regard to them. We believe that when you have before you the whole facts of this case, you will come to the conclusion that the right hon. Gentleman's exploit in Tipperary is as vindictive an act of tyranny, and as ignominious a failure, as ever disgraced the name of an English statesman.

(8.32.) Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

*(8.35.) MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): The suggestion made some time ago by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian was one which I think required an answer from some Member of the Government. Specific statements have been made by the Mover of the Motion for the Adjournment. These statements have been contradicted by the Chief Secretary, for Ireland. The statements made by the hon. Member were made in great part upon his own personal knowledge, and they were contradicted, at the best, on information supplied by the Chief Secretary; and I think it would have been only courteous to the House if in a matter of this kind the Chief Secretary, in contradicting statements, had supplied us with the authority from whom he obtained his information.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course, Sir, I made my statement upon information supplied through the official Reports, as every Chief Secretary is obliged to do.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I think the House is also entitled to know the position of the person making the Report on which the Chief Secretary contradicts the statements of the hon. Member for Mayo, especially when the statements of that hon. Member are specific, and the denial exceedingly general. The specific charges—and I will draw attention to some of them that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian did not refer to—seemed to me to be capable of such explicit proof or disproof that I do not think the right hon. Gentleman has left the House or himself in a worthy position by a mere denial. There was not only the police charge on the hon. Member and half-a-dozen friends in the square, but there was a charge upon the people who shook hands with these gentlemen, and a charge on the people who cheered them, and the specific boast of Mr. Shannon of the batoning of the people by the police. All these statements are covered by the general denial that the police charged the people in any case until first subject to stone-throwing.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I made my statement upon the official Reports, and I referred only to Tipperary. I do not think I dealt at all with the alleged charge at Cashel.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Then I take it that there is no denial of the charging by the police at Cashel; and, that being so, there is no "specific and categorical denial" of the case submitted by the hon. Member for Mayo this evening.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think I dealt at all with the alleged charge at Cashel.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I am sure I am indebted to the right hon. Gentleman for any correction of my speech. I always try to make my facts as fair as I can, and in this case I desire to make them as hard as I can. I want to point out to the right hon. Gentleman that as I understand his corrected defence——

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Not corrected —original [A VOICE: Very original.].

*MR. BRADLAUGH: My impression is that the right hon. Gentleman said he had given a categorical denial to all the charges made by the hon. Member for East Mayo.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Certainly.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I thought so; and if I am right in that, then I should also be right in speaking of his corrected form of answer.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: What occurred was this: The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian distinctly stated that I had not traversed the statement of the hon. Member for East Mayo with regard to the occurrences at Tipperary. I said that I had traversed them, and I also asserted, and I adhere to the statement that no baton charge was made by the police until stones had been thrown. That has no reference in one way or the other to the occurrences at Cashel.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: The right hon. Gentleman will pardon my giving my version of the matter, even though, in his opinion, it may not be correct. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, adopting, from his view of the veracity of the hon. Member for Mayo, the statements he made, urged that they had not been contradicted, and I understood the Chief Secretary to say that he had categorically contradicted those statements. It now appears this was wrong, and that the right hon. Gentleman only contradicted one of the matters to which allusion was made, and that, instead of saying that the police had never charged except when stoned, he meant to say that they did not charge on one occasion in the square until they were stoned, and that of everything else he was ignorant.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not wish to argue the question, but I do not agree with that statement.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I do not expect the right hon. Gentleman to agree with me, but I now think there is higher ground for inquiry still, and that the Motion for Adjournment has been clearly justified, for the larger portion of the case, upon the statement of the Chief Secretary himself, now remains without contradiction. Although the Chief Secretary has taken care to have Reports, his subordinates, who ought to have furnished him with the means of stating the truth to the House, have neglected to do so. Somebody who is responsible for giving him information has not thought it right to let him know the facts. I submit that the adjournment has been justly moved, and that the answer to it is utterly incomplete. I think that the few hon. Members on the other side of the House who have heard the corrected answer of the Chief Secretary will be bound to vote for the adjournment on the ground that the bulk of the facts remain as stated by the hon. Member for Mayo, utterly uncontradicted by the Chief Secretary. I am bound to say that, knowing the ability of the Chief Secretary, I was disappointed with his speech. Of course, it is clever tactics to make an able speech and pass by the most important matter of challenge, but I am disappointed to find that any one claiming to represent the Government, and desiring to bring about a better affection for law and order in Ireland should have avoided the bulk of the questions raised to-night, as the right hon. Gentleman has done. There are Members of the Government whom I might have suspected of not answering, on account of incapacity, but the Chief Secretary is not one of these; and the other horn of the dilemma is quite as unpleasant. The right hon. Gentleman himself said that two questions were involved in this Debate, the first being, "Did the police act without moderation and with want of judgment," and the second, "Had the Government just ground for proclaiming the meeting." With the first question the right hon. Gentleman has not attempted to deal. Is then, the case affecting the police abandoned? No attempt has been made to meet the grave allegations against the police in respect of their batoning and charging the people outside the town of Tipperary. If the law relating to public meetings is the same in Ireland as in England, then the uncontradicted case of the hon. Member for East Mayo shows that an extraordinary series of illegalities have been committed by the Executive and the police. In regard to the uncontradicted case, it certainly appears to me that there is ground for the inquiry asked for by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. As to the occurrences in Tipperary, I am bound to say that the corrected denial of the Chief Secretary, or the corrected avoidance of denial, appears to me a little awkward, because, unless my memory fails me, I think I heard the right hon. Gentleman say he had read about these things in the papers —and that it was upon his full examination of the matter that he felt capable of giving an explicit denial. Now, it is clear that that cannot be true. I do not mean that anything the Chief Secretary said was not true, but that the right hon. Gentleman must have misled himself. It is clear that the right hon. Gentleman was unintentionally totally inaccurate, and that he unintentionally utterly deceived the House when he said there were versions which contradicted each other. The right hon. Gentleman and myself are agreed, if I may say so, that the proclamation of a meeting does not make it illegal. If it be illegal otherwise, the proclamation neither decreases nor increases the illegality. How can you know whether a meeting will be illegal or not? You may know it will be illegal if it be avowedly called for an illegal object. The proclamation issued on the 23rd merely announced that John Dillon, M.P., and William O'Brien, M.P., would deliver addresses. You cannot import into these addresses what they are likely to be in order to give the meeting the character of illegality. *Primâ facie* the addresses would be lawful. There was nothing on the face of the placard to entitle you to say that the meeting would be illegal. But you dealt with it before anything happened at the meeting. You began to break heads before the meeting commenced. At Limerick Junction, according to the right hon. Gentleman, there were only 300 or 400 people. But that was 20 times as big a meeting as one of those that was charged upon. The hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) says there were 2,000 persons present at the Junction.

An hon. MEMBER: The *Times* says so.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: The *Times*. But you will not expect me to accept the authority of the *Times* in any matter in which there is any divergence of opinion between any two Members of this House. I know from experience that public speakers have sometimes a disposition, like fishermen as to catch, to increase in their own minds—without any intention of being untruthful—the size of the meetings they address. But if, in the opinion of the Chief Secretary, the police did well in letting alone a meeting of 300 or 400, why did they not do better in letting the smaller alone? I should fall under the censure of the House if, in any spirit of meanness, I said the police could be justified in batoning the people at a meeting when they were strong enough to do so, and were not justified in doing it when they were too weak. If that position were not taken up by a Member of the Government it would be a mean and contemptible position. If the police charged on the people who came to shake hands with the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) at the gateway, they not only displayed great want of tact and moderation, but were guilty of great brutality. That they did so is uncontradicted, and it is presumably true. I say that the Government ought to be ashamed of themselves for the attitude they have taken up on this point. The Chief Secretary's language puzzled me. He said that the account of the transaction given by the hon. Member for East Mayo and his own account were vitally different. I find that, instead of the two accounts being vitally different, there is only a very small portion on which there is any difference. The Government have let judgment go by default against them. Who are on their trial? That is a question the Chief Secretary for Ireland answers, but which we shall not get fully answered until an election takes place. I will, however, venture to anticipate one or two of the issues on which the English people will be asked to pronounce a verdict. The Chief Secretary for Ireland said that very little damage was done. But is it no damage, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian said, to drive a police car into a crowd so that the shafts catch a poor woman on the breasts, and the horses are only turned aside by the blackthorns of the men? Is it a trifle to charge among the people with batons and to use the butts of rifles? It used not to be a trifle in England, and we must have got into a degraded state indeed when an English Government can defend this in the House of Commons. Again, I find that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary pledged himself to a personal conviction based upon his complete examination of the matters which had been submitted to the House. But how could he have a personal conviction on matters which he had not examined at all? We are told it was a dangerous thing for the two hon. Members who have spoken this evening to be allowed to address a meeting in Tipperary. Why more dangerous for them to do so than at the Junction? The conduct of the police in permitting those addresses there has been approved by the Chief Secretary this evening. A meeting which is a menace to the State in one place cannot cease to be a menace to the State if held three miles off. I will not describe anything the Chief Secretary says as nonsense, but I am sure it would have been the most utter nonsense if I had said it, and utterly unworthy of being regarded as a grave appeal to the House. I happened the other day to be reading a number of

Blackwood, some 40 years old, and I found the landlord mischief denounced by one of the first Whig politicians of the day, in the same way as they are denounced by the hon. Members for North-East Cork and Mayo. They say that whatever mischief they may have done they have at any rate put some hope into the hearts of the people of effecting their own redemption by open organisation, and the result is that the few survivals of the old bad spirit are survivals chiefly kept alive by the survival of old methods on the part of the Government. Even under a Government as bad as this, when the police did not interfere, no disorder took place. The claim set up by the Government to-night in answer to the appeal made to them for the preservation of some of the rights of meeting is simply that wherever the Member for East Mayo or the Member for North-East Cork happen to go the fact of their going warrants the Government in preventing the holding of meetings. Why? Because the Government is utterly afraid, and if the Members speak sedition or incite to crime they may be indicted. But the Government do not wait for these things. Our memories must be very short. We commenced the Session with a flourish of trumpets as to the pacification of Ireland. To-night we have a frank confession of utter and abject weakness, and are told that the Government dare not allow hon. Members of this House to address the people in open meeting. The Chief Secretary expressed a doubt as to whether he ought to have allowed even a banquet in Tipperary. I have not the honour of the friendship of the hon. Member for Mayo (Mr. Dillon), except as one Member may find himself friendly with every Colleague who, like him, is entrusted with the mandate of the people. But the hon. Member's words were words that rang like truth. It is no use discussing whether the Government were justified in proclaiming the meeting. The Chief Secretary and the Government seem to consider that all rights of meeting are to be put an end to both in England and Ireland. There is such a thing as going too far. I had the honour of successfully arguing before one of England's greatest Judges that in relation to a meeting in Devon I should have been justified in killing a constable who unlawfully interfered with me. The Attorney General for Ireland laughs. I know my knowledge of law is not fit to match with his, although it has been found fit to match with, at least, the hon. and learned Gentleman's Colleagues. I recommend the right hon. and learned Gentleman to read the grave language in which the Lord Chief Justice Earle examined my proposition. The Judges of this country have helped to make the law here a protection to the meanest of our subjects, but the law in Ireland is used as a sort of thumbscrew. The law in England has been and is if it can be declared fair between the weakest, and poorest and the strongest, but is it so in Ireland. The hon. Member for East Mayo asked whether the man who is alleged to have had his forehead cut with a baton is to be prosecuted. I imagine, and I think the House imagined, that the Chief Secretary denied the fact. It is clear now the fact comes in the category of fact that is not denied. Is the man to be tried? Is he to be tried before a Resident Magistrate? If he were tried here, and was unjustly committed, he could appeal to the Quarter Session, and if the law were strained against him there he could carry the case to a Divisional Court. In Ireland things are different. You say that a character of a meeting is changed by your proclamation. If a man goes to a meeting and draws attention to himself you send him before a Resident Magistrate, who does not administer the law as we have known it administered here, without fear and without partiality. The Irish Resident Magistrate administers the law as a machine, to be used for making what you call and order, which is really only an apparent quiet which begets the crime which has been referred to. I say that a Government which strains the law so that it is shapeless, which sends poor unfortunate men to gaol if they resist the driving of a horse and car at a gallop into a crowded meeting, provokes bigger crime. What makes men criminal? It is no hope of justice. I do not complain that the Chief Secretary has left since the earlier portion of my speech. It is probably for my quiet he has done so, because we disagreed so exceedingly during that portion of my remarks. But is it worthy of the position of the Government, standing, as it professes to do, in front of civilisation, to say that these are small things? Small things at the end of the 19th century? Small things when you prate of the progress you have made? I avow I feel ashamed of the excuses made by the Government. The Chief Secretary asked who and what is on trial. It is the whole system of government in Ireland, and this Motion for the adjournment of the House has been well brought, if only by way of an interlocutory appeal to the English people.

(9.15.) MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I take it that the real question at issue whether there should be a public Parliamentary Inquiry into the occurrences at Tipperary on Sunday fortnight. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian has requested that such an inquiry should be held. The inquiry is asked for because there is a discrepancy between the Chief Secretary for Ireland, giving official information, and the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), who was present at the meeting. Nobody says that anybody was seriously hurt. A cripple has been referred to as injured, but we have not even got his name. The least we could expect is that if anybody has been seriously injured, his name should be given, so that investigation might be made. Now, if we are are to go by precedent, I am very much afraid that the inquiry asked for cannot be granted. If we take the precedents, all of them under the auspices of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and most of them when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir G. Trevelyan) was Chief Secretary, the Front Opposition Bench, at all events, cannot plead for inquiry. [*Cries of* "Belfast!"] I will not commence with Belfast, but with a part of my own county. ["Which is your county?"] The county I represent. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridgeton Division will well recollect the two meetings which were convened at a place called Dromore. I have always held that the second of the two meetings ought not to have been held. The Nationalists had a right to convene their meeting, and I do not think it was wise on the part of the Orangemen to convene a counter meeting at the same place and on the same day. What happened? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian objects to the police running after people and batoning them when they are running away. Why, at that meeting a man, whilst running away, was run through with a bayonet and killed, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridgeton Division refused an inquiry. In the first case I give there was a man killed while running away, and the Government of the right hon. Gentleman, who now demands an inquiry into a row in which no one was hurt—["Oh, oh!"]—well seriously hurt, refused an inquiry. The next case occurred on the 16th of August, 1880, at Dungannon, County Tyrone, under Mr. Forster, and when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian was Prime Minister. On that day a party riot occurred in the South of Dungannon, in the course of which houses were attacked and the police assaulted. Ultimately the District Inspector in charge gave orders to fire. One man was killed and several persons wounded. In the following week hon. Members below the Gangway forced a Debate on the subject, and Mr. Forster explained that the police could not avoid firing. No proceedings were instituted against the police, and no inquiry was held. I take another case which must be familiar to hon. Members, namely, that of Ballaragget, County Kildare, which took place on the 9th of October, 1881. I make no charge against hon. Members below the Gangway in these matters. They wished for inquiries, and inquiries were refused by the very Party who now demand an inquiry in a case in which no one was seriously hurt. On the 9th of October, 1881, a Land League meeting was held at Ballaragget, and a force of police was drafted into the town to keep order. At the termination of the meeting the police were marched to the railway station and they were attacked by an excited crowd. Orders to charge were given, for the purpose of dispersing the mob, and a man named James Mansfield received a bayonet wound, from which he died. A Coroner's Jury returned a verdict of wilful murder against the District Inspector who gave the order to charge. On the application of the Crown the verdict was quashed in the Queen's Bench, and when questioned in the House the then Attorney General declined to grant an inquiry, saying that the Government were in full possession of all the facts. The Attorney General was Mr. Johnson, and everybody knows on which side of the House he sat. One would suppose that all the shooting had been done by right hon. Gentlemen opposite, but the fact is that it has all been done by right hon. Gentlemen who sit on the Front Opposition Bench. In October, 1881, a party of police were engaged in protecting a summons server at Belmullet. They were attacked by a mob, who threw stones at them. The District Inspector in charge gave orders to fire, with the result that two women were killed. The Coroner's Jury again returned a verdict of wilful murder against the District Inspector and a constable. The Nationalist Press demanded that the men should be put on their trial, and the Attorney General directed the Crown Solicitor to get information and take the accused before a Magistrate. The Magistrate dismissed the charge, and no further proceedings were taken. Exactly the same thing took place at Ballina some time afterwards. A man was killed, but no inquiry was allowed. I ask the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division why these inquiries were refused by the Government of which he was a Member? Were they refused for the purpose of shielding and protecting the police in an illegal action? The right hon. Gentleman will not say anything of the kind. ["Ireland was misrepresented."] Probably Ireland was misrepresented now. At all events that has nothing to do with the question I put, namely, were these inquiries refused during the time when the right hon. Gentleman was Chief Secretary with the view of shielding the police and protecting them in illegal conduct? I do not believe a word of it. I believe the inquiries were refused because the Government, acting on the best information they could receive, believed that the police did not exceed their duty, and I imagine that if the Government refuse this inquiry that will be the reason for their refusal. The hon. Members for North-East Cork and East Mayo unite in an attack. It would be well they should try to be consistent one with the other as to the description given of the police. The hon. Member for Mayo called the police in Tipperary cowardly, infuriated savages. [*Cries of* "In Cashel!"] The hon. Member spoke of the police generally—["No!"]—and if he were present he would not deny it. The hon. Member for North-East Cork described the charge the police made upon himself and five or six other gentlemen who were standing doing nothing at the corner of the square. He said Colonel Caddell and the other officers of the police opened their ranks in order to avoid doing them any harm. What terrible savages! They never lifted a baton, but when they came up to the crowd of seven or eight people, these cowardly, infuriated savages opened their ranks in order to avoid injuring the hon. Member and his friends. The reports in the *Irish Times* and *Daily Express* have been paraded before the House, and, no doubt, these are Unionist papers; but it does not follow that to Sunday meetings they always send Unionist reporters. [*Laughter.*] On the contrary, I know that as regards the *Irish Times*, at all events, the majority of the reporting staff in my days were Nationalists and not Unionists, and, of course, these gentlemen will colour their reports according to their convictions. Now, let us take the question of the policy of the Government in proclaiming the meeting at Tipperary. That question is entirely different from the conduct of the police, I admit. But let us take the policy of the Government in proclaiming this meeting. I say nobody who knows anything of the state of Tipperary and of the facts mentioned in the Chief Secretary's speech, can have the least doubt of the wisdom of the policy that directed the proclamation. What was the real meaning of the proclamation? Meetings had been held a few weeks before, and a number of first-class revolutionists from England had delivered addresses, and a fortnight afterwards another great meeting is resolved upon. Why was this? The real reason was that the period for redemption for tenants under the Land Act of 1887 was about to expire, and these hon. Gentlemen no doubt had information of what was taking place in the town and neighbourhood of Tipperary, and I have received reliable information from Tipperary itself and its neighbourhood that the object of the meeting was to intimidate the tenants, and to prevent them from redeeming their holdings. I fully admit that the right of public meeting is a sacred one, but at the same time I think that the right of the tenants to redeem their holdings is equally sacred, and that public meetings held with the object of preventing them from exercising that right ought to be proclaimed, and that a Government having information of this object of a meeting would neglect its duty if it did not proclaim such a meeting. And now let me say a word or two on the practice of shadowing. There is one point upon which hon. Members and I agree, and that is, that every policeman in Ireland should be distinguished by a number on his uniform. I have said before that it should be as easy to identify a policeman in any part of Ireland as it is in Belfast or Dublin. I entertain as great an objection to the system of shadowing as hon. Members below the Gangway, because I do not believe that it is efficacious. What is taking place in Tipperary? There are numbers of "corner boys" standing about the streets acting as pickets upon the shops open there. There are open arrangements for boycotting, and the man who makes the arrangements is perfectly well known to the police. You may shadow Father Humphries, who is the real instigator and the master of the whole Tipperary business in the street as much as you please, but you will never find out what passes in Father Humphries' house.

[The hon. Member's speech was interrupted several times by exclamations and laughter.]

*MR. SPEAKER: I must ask hon. Members not to interrupt the hon. Member so continuously. They will have an opportunity of replying.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The hon. Member for North-East Cork has congratulated the Chief Secretary upon a change of policy, that whereas in former times he went for the leaders he is now content to go for the rank and file. But other people have changed their policy. The hon. Member for North-East Cork has changed his policy on his own admission. ["No, no!"] In the old times of the League murder and outrage was committed, but these have passed away and the policy now is what the hon. Member terms legitimate boycotting.

MR. T. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour): In the absence of my hon. Friend I do not think he should be misrepresented. ["Order, order!"] It is a very grave accusation against my hon. Friend. What he stated was that murder and outrage took place before the Land League was constituted.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I do not think that is so. Murder and outrage did not cease with the formation of the League, it waxed more fierce. [*Cries of* "Not true; none in Tipperary!"] Tipperary was quiet until about 10 months ago, when hon. Members went down there and went from platform to platform rebuking the people for their quietness. But what is the nature of this legitimate boycotting? I do not think the people of England realise yet what this "legitimate boycotting" means. Frankly, I say I do not think the people of Ireland subjected to the practice fear personal violence so much as they do what is called legitimate boycotting. Take the case of Mr. Phillips. He has been boycotted because he has disobeyed the unwritten law of the League, and because he has refused to give up his farm, for which he has paid £1,000, and only asks in a free country to be allowed to remain an honest man and to pursue his business in peace, and refuses to become a beggar and a scoundrel. He does not consider his rent too high; he profits by his farm. Because he has done this he has been made the subject of legitimate boycotting, with the consequence that he has been deprived of the necessities of life, and when his child fell ill——[*Loud laughter.*] Ah, yes, when the hon. Members below the Gangway laugh at such a statement as that it only teaches us what we may have to expect in the future

MR. T. HARRINGTON: The hon. Member seems to indicate that I laughed, the imputation that I laughed is a gross ——[*Loud cries of* "Order!"]

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: It was the hon. Member who sits next to the hon. Member that I was referring to.

MR. CONDON (Tipperary, E.): I laughed at the statement of the hon. Member because Mr. Phillips' so-called child is 25 years old.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I will say a member of his family. I am following the description of Mr. Phillips, who refers to his child. ["As truthful as you."] I say that when that man's child fell ill the local druggist would not compound the medicine prescribed, and he was obliged to obtain the medicine from a long distance. That is what the hon. Member for Cork describes as legitimate boycotting.

An hon. MEMBER: That is not true.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I might also refer to the case of the old lady at Tipperary, who has been boycotted and had her windows smashed because she would not accept the policy of hon. Members below the Gangway; because she would not lend her neck to the yoke, and chose to live as she has lived in the past, honestly fulfilling her engagements, her windows were smashed, I suppose by those innocent urchins who make curious squibs out of axle boxes. ["Not true."] I say the Government were entitled, looking at the state of Tipperary, looking at the fact that this meeting was called immediately before the day of redemption under the Act of 1881, to proclaim the meeting; and I hold that so far as the conduct of the police is concerned they have committed no act which comes within miles of what was committed under the Secretaryship of the right hon. Gentleman below me, and who point-blank refused inquiry. If the inquiry asked for were to be granted, the result would be simply a conflict of testimony between the police on the one hand and the people on the other.

(9.44.) SIR G. TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): The hon. Member has challenged ex-Chief Secretaries on this Bench to explain why it was we refused inquiry into incidents that occurred under the former Government. My right hon. Friend can explain why it was inquiry was granted in the case of Belfast, and I will explain, in the one single instance the hon. Gentleman has brought forward out of his large *répertoire* in which I am concerned, why it was I refused inquiry in the case of Dromore. The hon. Member seems to think it is a very light matter we have before us, because he says few or no people had their heads broken. Into that I will not inquire, and I care comparatively little about it. I care for something else much more.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I did not say a light matter. I said a comparatively light matter.

SIR G. TREVELYAN: Well, I do not think it is a comparatively light matter, and I hope hon. Gentlemen opposite, who are representatives of free men in a free country, will not think this is a comparatively light matter. What we are dealing with is the right of free and open meeting, and it is strange that the hon. Member, who has attained an eminence remarkable, and in some respects not enviable, by his powers of free speaking to masses of his fellow-countrymen, should consider it a light matter to be denied the use of that power. In the case of Dromore, the object of our action was not to suppress free speech but to maintain it. Instead of suppressing a meeting at Dromore, the Government insisted that it should be held. It was a culminating case in a series of arduous and important crises. The Nationalists in the North of Ireland insisted upon their right to hold a meeting in their own part of the country, and the Orangemen of the North of Ireland denied them that right. They endeavoured to deny it first by coming to the Government and telling them that for the sake of the peace of the country they ought to suppress the Nationalist meeting, and when the Government refused to yield to the pressure that was put upon them by the Orangemen and by the Tory Press in this country, the Orangemen declared that they would hold a meeting at the same place and hour. If this had been a meeting of unarmed citizens to listen to speeches and pass resolutions we should have little cared. But it was to be a meeting, not of the inhabitants of the district, but of hordes of armed men, subsidised by the Orange leaders, and coming, many of them, distances of 100 and 150 miles. It was a most insidious snare to the Government. They would have been praised in every Tory paper if they had said what it was in their power to have said, that neither meeting should be held; but we were determined that at any sacrifice and risk we would vindicate the right of the Nationalists, to whom we were then opposed, to hold a meeting, and, consequently, we declared that, whether the Orangemen came armed or not, the meeting should be held. The assertion of this right required the presence of 1,200 armed men, cavalry and infantry; and if it had been 12,000 the expenses and the difficulty would have been amply repaid by the result. The Nationalist meeting was held, and it was protected; the Orange meeting was also held. A strong body of armed troops was posted between the two meetings, and it was during the organised and persistent attempt of the Orangemen to break through the lines of troops and to fall upon the unarmed Nationalists, not very pugnacious at that time, that a single life was lost. There was no dispute about the circumstances at all, either in this House or anywhere else. The present Lord Cross, speaking from this Front Bench, said he entirely agreed with the action of the Government, and down to this moment there has been no dispute as regards that action. In order to protect the right of free speech one life was unfortunately sacrificed; but the right of free speech is worth many lives. [Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: The man was running away.] But he had come 100 miles with the object of interrupting a meeting of his fellow countrymen; and in this case the House is dealing with the right of free meeting under different circumstances. If the Government wish systematically to suppress public meetings they had better do it by legislative enactment. It is an exceedingly dangerous course to pursue to apply the law which is in vogue in a free and self-governing country like England to a country like Ireland, which is not free and self-governing. The Government are endeavouring to wrest regulations which prevail in this country to the government or mis-government of public meetings in Ireland. In this country no meeting in itself is unlawful until a magistrate has read the Riot Act and has ordered the people to disperse, and if they do not disperse after that they may be tried before a jury and convicted of felony. That is the law in this country, what is the practice in Ireland? The charge is that at Tipperary the people were attacked without due notice. At Dromore the longest possible notice was given that the Nationalist meeting was to be protected, if needful by force. At Tipperary there is no doubt that groups of peaceable people were charged by the police on three occasions, and it is not denied by the Government. There are three distinct allegations, not one of which is denied, and as to the truth of which inquiry alone will give satisfaction. People are bound to take information in the first instance from the newspapers; but it is an extraordinary thing for the hon. Member to say that even the evidence furnished by Tory papers must be discounted, because it is possible they may be served by Nationalist reporters. The argument for inquiry is strengthened by the information that has come from the Ministerial Bench as to shadowing, in spite of our being told that Ireland is quiet to a degree scarcely known before. The Government have invented a new interference with liberty not known in any other civilised country, and which would be resented anywhere by our common human nature. Can such a system as has been described exist anywhere for a month without bringing about violent personal collisions and breach of the peace? It is all very well to talk about the state of Tipperary. What there is in Tipperary, in Donegal, and in other parts of the country is a state of terrible discontent, of something like hopeless despair, and of absolute mistrust of the Executive Government. For those three feelings what outlet is there except free speech? If inquiry is refused conceive what an idea you will sanction. You will sanction the idea that trusted men, like the hon. Member for East Mayo, may actually not visit a town in Ireland, may not be greeted by their fellow-citizens, but, for the next 15 or 20 years, the police shall have the right to rout their fellow-citizens up and down the town, and that they can do this with impunity. We are asked to believe that all this is absolutely necessary for the sake of protecting the citizens of the neighbourhood. The Member for East Mayo has disproved that by showing that all these outrages and dark doings which have been referred to preceded, and did not follow, the open-air meeting held at Tipperary two months ago. The Liberal Government may have been right or wrong when there were a certain number of bloody murders in Ireland in preventing a very small number indeed of public meetings on the spot where those murders had been recent; but for several years past the whole Liberal Party—and they never will go back from that, and under no circumstances will they ever consent to have anything to do with a repressive policy—have believed that Ireland is in a state in which the greatest security for order is liberty and free speech, and such an interference with liberty and free speech as that with reference to this meeting at Tipperary—so irritating, so useless, and so pernicious—has never taken place in Ireland.

*(10.5.) The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden): I do not know that the House generally will be disposed to think that the right hon. Gentleman has explained satisfactorily why, consistently with what he had just said, he did not grant an inquiry into the proceedings at Dromore; but the House, at any rate, will be satisfied that the right hon. Gentleman has just made a complete retractation of the principles upon which he conducted the Government of Ireland. It is within the knowledge of the House that when the right hon. Gentleman was responsible for the Government of Ireland, he suppressed numbers of meetings on the ground that the holding them would lead to murder, crime, and outrage. Now he says the Liberal Party under no circumstances will be guilty of such conduct again, and this, I repeat, is a complete retractation of the principles on which he governed Ireland. The particular point on which the right hon. Gentleman was pressed by the hon. Member for Tyrone was why in the Dromore case, it being alleged the police had pursued and killed a flying man, he did not grant an inquiry? Why is an inquiry to be granted in the present case, and refused in a case in which death actually occurred? In the case now being discussed by the House no serious injury was caused to anyone. The hon. Members for North-East Cork and East Mayo have spoken of the brutalities of the police; but where is the list of wounded at Tipperary?

Mr. DILLON: The Dublin *Daily Express* states that 40 people were knocked down by blows on the head at the first charge.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN: Will the right hon. Gentleman engage not to prosecute the wounded if the names are furnished?

*Mr. MADDEN: Not one case of serious injury has been complained of to any authority whatsoever.

Mr. GILL (Louth, S.): And if any one did complain he would get a summons the next day and be prosecuted.

*Mr. MADDEN: Hon. Members opposite will have an opportunity of answering me presently. Is there any person in hospital at the present moment from injuries received by the police charges? If any person has been injured by excesses committed by the authorities in suppressing the meeting, that person is not without his remedy. The right of public meeting in this country and in Ireland, as the hon. Member for Northampton has stated, is absolutely identical. It is not in the power of the Government by proclamation to make a meeting illegal. Who pretended that it was? The Crimes Act of 1882 must be in the minds of right hon. Gentlemen and hon. Gentlemen opposite. I must inform those hon. Gentlemen that the law is different now. Under the system of coercion under which Ireland groans, the law of public meeting is absolutely identical with the law of public meeting in England. Let any person interfered with unlawfully at a public meeting bring his action at law, and if the Judge lays down the law differently from the law in England let him bring his case to the Court of Appeal, and from the Court of Appeal to the House of Lords. Are hon. Gentlemen opposite willing to accept the House of Lords. [An hon. Member: No.] No; but they must accept the House of Lords as laying down the law for England, and no lawyer will contravene the proposition that the law of public meeting in England and Ireland being identical, the law in both countries must be brought in the last resort to the same test—the decision of the House of Lords. Now, one remarkable feature of this Debate is that there has been no serious attempt to show that in the suppression of this meeting the Irish Government have gone beyond their strict rights. The hon. Member for Mayo rather suggested than argued that the meeting was a legal one; but the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian was careful to hold in the background that portion of the speech of the hon. Member for Mayo. The right hon. Gentleman declined to attack the Government on that point, and it appears to me that a point on which the right hon. Gentleman the

Member for Mid Lothian declines to attack the Government must be an exceedingly bad point indeed. Both from the action of the right hon. Gentleman and the utter absence of any attempt on the part of the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken seriously to contend that this was a lawful assembly, I think that I can ask the House to say that this was an unlawful assembly.

MR. DILLON: Certainly not.

*MR. MADDEN: If the assembly which was proclaimed was rightly proclaimed as an unlawful assembly, hon. Members opposite are brought face to face with a second fact, namely, that the prevention of the meeting took place with no serious injury to any person, and I think that if the Executive have prevented an unlawful assembly without any serious injury it is action on which they may be congratulated. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has read to the House the proclamation, posted on the Friday before the meeting, by which it was proclaimed. The meeting was to be what was known as a monster meeting, to which excursion trains were to be run. In what condition was the town of Tipperary at that time? has any hon. Member attempted to deny that for months before that a system had been going on which I will call one of boycotting and intimidation? Has any hon. Member denied that a system of boycotting has been carried on there? I have read a letter in the public Press written by one of the Roman Catholic priests, in which he said that he would not be coward enough to deny that he had promoted boycotting, and the hon. Member for North-East Cork has stated that what he describes as legitimate boycotting has been going on in Tipperary. I think that the House may fairly assume that the boycotting that would satisfy the desires of the hon. Member, and was described by him as legitimate, is of a somewhat extreme character. The movement, therefore, which has been going on against the hon. Member for South Hunts has, it must be admitted, been promoted by boycotting and intimidation. Is that legal or not? Is a meeting in promotion of that object a legal meeting? I ask the House for what other purpose the meeting on the Sunday in question could have been convened except to support the movement against the hon. Member for South Hunts which was going on in the town, and which was carried on by boycotting and intimidation. Then the case is complete. The meeting was convened for the support of that movement, the active promoters of which say that they will not be cowards enough to deny that they have promoted boycotting. It is impossible to carry out the system of boycotting without intimidation; and I think that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, after what he said formerly, cannot deny that boycotting involves intimidation, and is carried out by means of intimidation. In fact, the grossest intimidation has been carried out in the town of Tipperary. Explosives have been used which have blown down portions of buildings in Tipperary, and would have killed persons who might have been inside; is the use of such explosives not intimidation? No Government responsible for the peace of Tipperary could have possibly allowed such a meeting to take place. The question to consider, then, is whether there has been any excess, any undue interference with rights, or anything that goes beyond what is absolutely necessary in the course of suppressing that meeting? The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has stated, with regard to the town of Tipperary, that no charge was made by the police until they had been stoned; and the information at the disposal of the Government went even further than that—to the effect that no batoning took place until the police had been actually attacked. The House must know that it is no easy matter to suppress a meeting of this character, where there is a crowded assembly, without serious collision between the police and the crowd; but in this case no such collision took place, and, so far from life being lost, no serious injury at all took place. That takes away the very foundation for the demand for an inquiry. The case of the Belfast riots was a very different thing. There riots had been going on day after day in the streets of Belfast, in which numbers of persons were shot down and actually deprived of life. That case is not to be compared with the suppression of a meeting in which, owing to the forbearance not only of the police, but also, I am happy to add, of the people, no serious occurrence has taken place. No serious attempt has been made to show that the action of the

Government in suppressing this meeting has been illegal, and, if it is so, any man who has been injured has his remedy at law. Further, I will say that I think that the manner in which the police discharged their duty on this occasion deserves our commendation.

(10.25.) MR. T. HARRINGTON: I think that the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken should define what he means by serious injury to an Irishman if he does not consider four blows from a baton and then being kicked by a policeman serious injury. What a lesson the Irish police will read from this! If one incitement more than another could be urged on the police to deal thoroughly and effectually with the heads of any unfortunate people with whom they may come into contact, it would be found in the two speeches delivered by right hon. Gentlemen opposite to-night. If they mean anything they are a direct censure on the police for not taking the lives of their victims, and they are a proof to the people of this country that the taking of liberties with the rights of Irishmen is not a subject for discussion in this House. I was myself a witness of the scenes in Tipperary, and I confess that the gross manner in which every incident which occurred in Ireland is misrepresented makes me ashamed of the manner in which the law is administered in that country. The word of the most drunken and rowdy policeman is taken as gospel by the Chief Secretary; while the words of hon. Members of this House who have gone through the occurrences and pledged their honour to the accuracy of their accounts are sneered at and disregarded. I assert that not one single stone was thrown until the last of the meetings in the town had been suppressed. I myself was seated on the carriage which followed the hon. Member for East Mayo, in company with the hon. Member for North-East Cork, and not only did the police baton the people who attempted to come up and speak to us, or shake hands with us, but they also used their batons on the horses in the carriage. We are told that the meeting was proclaimed because it would lead to a breach of the peace, and because it was an outdoor meeting in support of a combination against the hon. Member for South Hunts. But if this was so, why would not a meeting indoors have effected the same objects? Would it not be quite as likely to lead to intimidation as an outdoor meeting? We intend to maintain the right of public meeting in our country. When we do attempt to hold a meeting in the open-air, the meeting is proclaimed because it is illegal; but if we merely closed the door and shut out the Government reporter, and taught any abominable doctrine, the meeting would be legal. Is that an argument to address to the House of Commons? If our object were unlawful, and we desired to preach boycotting and combination against the hon. Member for South Hunts, we must accept the miserable compromise which the right hon. Gentleman has offered us. But is the combination against the hon. Member for South Hunts illegal? Who has yet argued that it is illegal? There has been no resistance to the law on that estate, no fortification of houses; and is there any Judge who would not laugh at the right hon. and learned Gentleman if he alleged that combination against the hon. Member for South Hunts was sufficient reason for suppressing the meeting? I am surprised that one occupying the position of the right hon. Gentleman should get up and endeavour to address the argument to us. We have as much right to combine against the hon. Member for South Hunts in respect to lands and rents as have the electors to combine against the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Balfour) in Manchester. The right hon. Gentleman denied that there were any persons shadowed in Ireland except those suspected of being concerned in boycotting, but I can tell him that when he goes back to Manchester he will find that two or three of his most influential supporters among the Conservatives have been persistently shadowed by the police. The right hon. Gentleman the Attorney General has given a legal opinion upon the right of public meeting. The unfortunate peasant of Tipperary, if he endeavours to assert the right of public meeting gets his head smashed. The Attorney General says he has the right of appeal to the Irish County Courts, or he can ultimately come to the House of Lords. That is a convenient course, no doubt, for the Irish peasant, wishful to assert his rights, but I venture to say that if he adopts it, the time will be long before he gets his rights through that avenue. But the Irish peasantry prefer to take the more manly course of insisting on the right of public meeting, and they defy the right hon. Gentleman and all his agents to prevent them asserting that right. Here is a very curious thing we have had from the Attorney General. He has passed over all the incidents and attacks at the various small meetings, and neither he nor the Chief Secretary has attempted to answer what is grave in our charge. The Attorney General admits that the mere proclamation by the Government has no effect upon the right of public meeting. He says that you must judge of the public meeting altogether by its surroundings and circumstances. One of the reasons given for proclaiming that this meeting in Tipperary was illegal was that squibs or bombs were used. But these squibs were used before in the English meeting in Tipperary, to which every word he has spoken might have been applied with greater force than in the present instance, but which was not attempted to be interfered with. Why attempt to justify your position by shabby arguments of this kind? We have heard a speech from the hon. Member for South Tyrone, a characteristic speech, and evidently prepared for some other occasion. In fact, I sat for a long time admiring the dexterity with which the hon. Member applied to this occasion a brief which was evidently intended for some Scotch or English platform, denunciatory of Members on these Benches and commending the Government. What is the lesson taught the Irish police? That they may be encouraged to drunkenness and riotous conduct on these occasions, and that next they will be shielded and defended in this House. Surely the right hon. Gentleman cannot but think that on some, at all events, of these occasions, he may be deceived. He is very sceptical about the statements of Irish Members, but he has implicit faith in any Irishman who will act on his own side. Will the right hon. Gentleman on any of these occasions put to the test the information which he gives to this House, and which he derives from officers in Ireland? I am surprised that the right hon. Gentleman has not some regard for his own character. He must know that it is a very serious thing for one in his responsible position, with the eyes of the world upon him, that the statements of hon. Members in this House and the information which he gives as derived from the police are sure to be as wide as the poles asunder.

(10.40.) Captain BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness): Sir, I have listened with attention to the Debate, and I cannot help thinking that there has been no answer given to the statement of the hon. Member for East Mayo. This is not an ordinary case, because the hon. Member for East Mayo spoke of a matter of which he had not only personal knowledge, but in which he was absolutely an actor. The Chief Secretary for Ireland, I understand, was not able to answer, right off, the detailed statement, but the hon. Member has a personal acquaintance with what occurred. I most respectfully submit to the House, and to my right hon. Friend, that the meetings ought not to be dispersed until notice has been given, and that people, if they are flying, ought not to be pursued and batoned. I say these few words, Mr. Speaker, with considerable regret, because I have been a very consistent supporter of the Government of my right hon. Friend, in whom, I am bound to say, I have great confidence. But I also have very great confidence that when, upon further inquiry, he finds the statement of the hon. Member for East Mayo to be true, he will take care to administer such rebuke as may be necessary. I do not wish on this subject to engage in any Debate, but as to the system of shadowing described, it is to my mind—and I use the word not in its blasphemous sense—damnable.

*(10.42.) Mr. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I doubt whether, in the observations I propose to address to the House, I could add anything to the force and effect of what the hon. Member has just said with reference reference to the present administration in Ireland. I hope, however, that the expression of opinion which the hon. Gentleman has given utterance to will have weight with the Government as indicating opinions, though they may not think so, which are entertained by a large section of their supporters both in the House and out of it. [*Ministerial cries of* "No, no."] Hon. Gentlemen may cry "No, no" now, but I know what they will say when they go before their constituents. Many years ago Mr. Bright said he had observed that any recital in the House of the wrongs or

sufferings of Ireland was met with denial, insult, or contempt. I think we may say this evening that all those three manifestations of feeling have been meted out to the Representatives of the Irish people The House has heard the denial which the Chief Secretary invariably gives to every statement made in the House, no matter what the evidence may be by which it was supported, in which he always shelters himself from being brought to book to prove his statement by saying, "I am informed; from the information I have received; I have no doubt that the hon. Member for East Mayo is not telling the truth; I will not tell you the names of those from whom I have received my information; I will give you no opportunity of testing that information as to whether it is correct or incorrect, but I deny it." A great deal has been said with reference to the administration by my right hon. Friend the Member for the Bridgeton Division. I have sat in this House through the administrations of several Chief Secretaries: and I hope my right hon. Friend will pardon me if I venture to say that the mode in which the Irish Chief Secretary, whether Mr. Forster or my right hon. Friend in his day, or the present Chief Secretary, have invariably announced to the House that from information they have received the statements of the Irish Members are incorrect, has led me to form a very hesitating opinion as to the value of the evidence which is placed in the hands of the Irish Chief Secretaries. No man has a higher opinion than I have of the extraordinary acuteness and intellectual power of the Chief Secretary. I will not insult the right hon. Gentleman by suggesting for a moment that he really in his heart of hearts believes what he read to the House. We have had to-night one of the usual stories of denial. I do not suppose the Government would grant a Committee of Inquiry for the very good reason that they dare not. Hon. Members have stated what they saw with their own eyes. They have recited assaults committed upon themselves by the servants of the Crown. The Government have no evidence contradicting the statement except a blank denial, and they refuse to give the House an opportunity of inquiring into the truth of statements made by some of its own Members.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The only assault which was alleged was admitted. I mean the one that was made on the hon. Member for East Mayo.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: I understood the right hon. Gentleman to deny the statement of my hon. Friends. The Attorney General for Ireland said that the law in reference to public meetings was the same in England as in Ireland. In England, however, the question whether a meeting was lawful or unlawful would have to go not to the House of Lords, but to a Jury, but in Ireland it has to go to a Resident Magistrate. In England the question as to whether an assembly is an unlawful one or not would have to be tried by a Jury, and the common sense of the Jury would have to be brought to bear on the question whether, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, there was evidence to convince them that the meeting was held with criminal intention or was otherwise unlawful. In Ireland, however, it is otherwise, and instead of being tried by a Jury these things have to be decided by a Resident Magistrate. I am reading from the opinion of one of the greatest lawyers at the English Bar, who is substantially quoting the charge of Mr. Justice Patteson given on this question many years ago.

MR. MADDEN: What I stated was that any person who has been interfered with, as he alleges, unlawfully in a public assembly or meeting, which he alleges to be a lawful meeting, has in Ireland, as in England, a right to bring his action. That civil action in Ireland, as in England, must go before a Jury, and if the Judge who tries that action misdirects the Jury upon the law, the plaintiff has an appeal, first to the Court of Appeal in Ireland, and ultimately to the House of Lords.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: I must express my amusement at the idea of a Tipperary peasant going to the House of Lords. Such a thing as bringing a civil action is not practicable in such cases. Attending an unlawful meeting is a criminal offence. A man is indicted for it in this country, and in Ireland he goes before the Resident Magistrate—Colonel Caddell, or somebody else. The right hon. Gentleman used very extraordinary language when he said the proclamation made a meeting unlawful, and when he added, "We will permit or not permit such a meeting," he has no power legally to allow or disallow such a meeting. He may declare that, in the opinion of the Government, it is unlawful, and if a man attended it he runs the risk of being punished in the event of it being proved to have been unlawful. The House will be led very much astray from the point of this Debate if we get into a discussion as to the lawful or unlawful meetings, as to the Plan of Campaign, or as to the legality or illegality of the proceedings in Tipperary. What has been brought before the House is the brutality of the police, the injustice of the Resident Magistrates, and the infamous system of shadowing the Queen's subjects in Ireland. Admitting, merely for the sake of argument, that this meeting was an unlawful one, still the police had not the right to disperse it in this brutal manner, and before they had declared to all present that the meeting was unlawful and they must return to their homes. That, at any rate, is the law in this country. I would ask right hon. and hon. Gentleman opposite if, for a moment, they will strip this question of its Party aspect, whether, in administering the law relating to the police of this country, they would allow English police constables to behave as the Irish policemen behaved on this occasion? We are told by hon. Members that they saw the police batoning the crowd, and the Chief Secretary has not denied it. There were five Members of Parliament standing together, and they heard the order given, "Charge with your bâtons, and clear those men out." I do not understand that to be denied, and I ask, Is this the sort of thing which Hon. Members opposite would allow to take place in this country? But, Sir, we have to look at this case not only as it affects the people of Ireland, but also as it affects the rights of Members of this House. Half these things—I may say 9-10ths of them—are done because some of those present are Members of Parliament, and not because they are acting in a private capacity. I charge the Chief Secretary with systematically doing his utmost to bring Irish Members of Parliament into contempt because they are Members of Parliament; and that, I contend, is conduct unworthy of any English Minister. My hon. Friend the Member for Poplar (Mr. S. Buxton) took a prominent part last autumn—a part well worthy of his great ability—in the conflict then going on between capital and labour in the East of London. Can any Member of this House conceive what would be the position of the Chief of the Metropolitan Police in setting constables to shadow the footsteps of my hon. Friend, wherever he went, from morning to night, listening to everything he said, taking note of everyone he spoke to, and generally dogging his progress as he went about from one place to another? I ask hon. Gentlemen opposite —I ask this House—would such a thing as that be tolerated in this city for half an hour? Why, Sir. there is no English Minister who would dare to incur the responsibility for such a course of procedure, or, if such a Minister could be found, he would not be able to retain office for a single week. But, as I have said, the Irish Members are to receive unjust treatment of this kind because they are Irish Members. But who is it you employ to treat them in this matter? They are the Resident Magistrates and the police—the men whom the Irish Members feel it necessary to criticise in this House, the men whose conduct they impeach—these are the men you set to insult them in every way, so that, if possible, you may send those Members to prison. I say that this conduct is unworthy of the Government, and unworthy of the traditions of this House. We are all Members of one Parliament, and what we wish to preserve is the integrity of that Parliament, but there are, in fact, two Parliaments in this House, and the Gentlemen who sit on that (the Ministerial) side are not treated in the same way as those who sit below the Gangway on this side of the House. That is the *gravamen* of the charge. The question is not whether a meeting is legal or illegal, but whether the police of Ireland are systematically encouraged in trampling on the rights and liberties of the people. The question is whether these Resident Magistrates, ignorant of law and ignorant of justice, virtually police officers—faithful servants, I admit, of the Executive, and nothing else—are to be allowed to degrade and disgrace the administration of justice. Our vote to night will be a protest against that branch of the Irish Executive, and, although we may be beaten, and no doubt we shall be beaten, the day is coming very rapidly when the English people will have a word to say upon this question. Then the Representatives of the liberty-loving people of England and Scotland will know how to deal with these officials in Ireland.

(10.58.) MR. GILL: I desire to offer a word or two before this discussion closes. If the ordinary courtesies which are supposed to govern the Debates of this House were regarded in relation to the Irish Members it would be unnecessary for me or any one present on these Benches to get up and corroborate the statements that have been made on the responsibility of an hon. Member of this House. My hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo has given a narrative of what he himself witnessed, which has had the effect of impressing even some of the hon. Members opposite, and the reply of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has mainly consisted of denials made in the names of anonymous policemen whose conduct is the subject of our investigation. As one who accompanied my hon. Friend into the square of Tipperary on the Sunday on which the meeting was held, I was an eyewitness to the scenes he has described, and stood among the group which the police charged with their batons. Every single circumstance that my hon. Friend has detailed, as recording that scene, I witnessed and hereby corroborate, and there are four other hon. Members who can do the same—and being Members of this House, they are, by our traditions, entitled to have their word of honour believed. In spite of all this testimony the right hon. Gentleman gives a flat denial to our statements; and this, in whatever sort of Parliamentary phrase he may choose to disguise it, simply amounts to hurling the lie at us across the floor of this House. The Chief Secretary's statement has received a comment from the other side of the House which, I think, is one of the first symptoms of the opinion which will be passed on him by the English nation. The observations of the hon. and gallant Member opposite were a sufficient answer and rebuke to the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman, not only as to the meeting at Tipperary and the scenes which took place there, but also as to his conduct during the Debate this evening. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman was not only indecent in its method as denying the truth of statements made by Members of this House on their word of honour, but it was insulting. His speech and the manner in which he has since met the speeches of hon. Members on this side by sneers and laughter, are all characteristic of the manner in which he administers the law in Ireland. The scenes which occurred in Tipperary on the Monday, and to which no reference has been made in the Debate, are equally worthy of the condemnation of the House and equally illustrate the rule of the right hon. Gentleman. The Members for East Mayo and North-East Cork and myself were followed about by the police, who batoned every group of people they saw in our vicinity. Twenty times during the day I saw the police bustling the people about, and with my own eyes I saw one policeman strike a poor woman on the face with his fist whilst she was held by another. I submit that if ever there was a case for having an inquiry it is the transactions connected with the suppression of these meetings. An unanswerable case has been made out to-night, and, though the Division will be against us, I believe the Debate will not be ineffectual in calling the attention of the English people to the right hon. Gentleman's rule in Ireland, and that it will be an effectual means of bringing about the self-government of Ireland which we have every hope of securing at the next General Election.

(11.5) MR. PARNELL (Cork): I certainly expected, as I think many Members of this House expected, that we should have had some intelligible answer from a spokesman of the Government in response to the suggestion which was made by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian with regard to an inquiry into the unhappy circumstances complained of by the hon. Member for East Mayo. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary is armed with very important and extensive power; he is practically, through his agents, intrusted in Ireland with the power of life and death; and I think that the country and the House ought to insist that those powers shall be used not unnecessarily, but with judgment and discretion, and, if there is to be action of a punitive character, it shall be taken not against poor people, such as those who suffered on this occasion, but against those whom the right hon. Gentleman would consider to be ringleaders and responsible persons. In the history of events such as those which have happened at Tipperary nothing has struck me so much as the utter disregard of public rights and liberty which has been shown on all occasions. It appears to be assumed that the poor people are to be brutally intimidated and ill-treated for the purpose of preventing them from exercising that right which is the dearest right of Britons—the right of free assembly and free meeting—so that it may be made impossible for a public assembly of any kind to be held whenever the right hon. Gentleman chooses to say it shall not be allowed. This is not your interpretation in England of the right of free meeting and free assembly and freedom of speech; and it ought not to be in Ireland. If any law has been transgressed—if, in the announcement of Thursday the law was transgressed—due notice should have been given to the peasantry of Tipperary before they assembled and before this terrible risk was incurred, a risk which was not so slight as the right hon. Gentleman would have us believe, because there were no fewer than 150 people treated in the hospitals of the district as a consequence of the action of the police on that occasion. People were treated in the hospitals mostly for horrible injuries about the head. The right hon. Gentleman knew that this meeting was to be held on Sunday. Why was not notice given on Friday? It could have been given on Thursday. But no notice was given until Saturday. And then what was the action of the police? No attempt was made in the town of Tipperary to hold any meeting whatever; but the police, acting on their instructions, wherever they saw two or three persons gathered together, charged them and assaulted them in the manner which has been described by my hon. Friend. They charged them with their batons, they struck them about the head, and they intimidated them and injured them as much as they possibly could without the use of firearms. That is not the way to treat people who were at least not primarily responsible for the proceedings objected to by the right hon. Gentleman. He has passed over my hon. Friends the Members for East Mayo and North-East Cork, and he has let loose these armed constables upon the peasants, who cannot judge as to the law and as to the rights of the Government in this matter, who even had no notice except the posting of the Proclamation late on Saturday that the Government held that this meeting was illegal, and who only thought that they were doing their duty to their country in coming in response to the summons of their leaders to take part in this meeting in vindication of free speech. Is that any justification for the action of the Government in attacking them in this brutal and cowardly fashion? If anybody was deserving of being batoned, the hon. Members for North-East Cork and East Mayo were. If there was legal authority for any blows struck in Tipperary, that authority would have been on the side of the policeman who struck the hon. Members. No such attack was made. It was only the poor peasants of the neighbourhood, who thought they were doing their duty loyally to their leaders—just as the constituents of the right hon. Gentleman would think they were doing theirs if they came to a meeting summoned in his constituency—who had to feel the weight of the Government's displeasure, and to bear back to their families and humble cottages the marks of police brutality, and who had to reflect bitterly on the sort of justice and law administered in Ireland by the orders and under the dispensation of the right hon. Gentleman. The people of Tipperary have gone into this struggle; they may be right or they may be wrong. That question is not concerned here, but whether they are right or wrong they have gone into it out of a feeling of loyalty to their leaders and to their country, and because they honestly think that they are doing their duty to their country in the only way that is possible for them. Better treatment should have been extended to them than the horrible and infamous brutality which has been related to us to-night by the hon. Member for North-East Cork. If there is law on the side of the right hon. Gentleman, why should he not have instituted his proceedings against the leaders—why should he have studiously shielded the leaders from attack, and have selected poor and obscure persons for this treatment? It may be said that these peasants have open access to the Courts. We know what an action of law is in this country; the expenses involved; and how many weary months go by before the wrongdoer has exhausted every artifice of delay and the injured person can approach the portals of justice to obtain redress. It is worse than mockery to tell the Tipperary peasant, after his brains have been dashed out by a police baton, or by the butt of the policeman's rifle—it is a mockery, I say, to tell him to go into a Court of Law, and if he should succeed in identifying his assailant, to recover his damages. But supposing that he had asserted his rights still further, supposing the celebrated blackthorns of Tipperary had overpowered the batons of the police, then we should have had the sabres of the dragoons and the rifles and bayonets of the infantry, and it would have been replied that the peasants had the power of action against the soldiery for any loss of life or injury to person that they might have suffered. But this is a question of notice, of the conduct of the police in dispersing these assemblies, and of their action with regard to the right of the people to cheer a popular favourite and shake hands with him free from assault or attack. It is a question of rights and wrongs which can be very easily investigated, and in reference to which we demand public investigation by a fair tribunal. As I stated at the outset, I am surprised that we have had no definite answer from some responsible officer of the Government to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian with regard to his suggestion that the whole question should be fairly and openly brought forward, and that the blame should be fairly distributed—if it is on my hon. Friend, let it be placed on his shoulders; if it rests with the Government let them bear it. It is not fair that obscure people, that poor and ignorant people, should be compelled to suffer for the bad judgment or wrongdoing of my hon. Friends on the one side or of the Government on the other. If you wish to maintain the law in Ireland, let the people see that the law is made for them just as much as for their betters, that their heads and bodies are as sacred from the attacks of policemen's truncheons as the heads and bodies of my hon. Friends. Let them see that the Government is an equal Government and a firm Government—that the Government will not discriminate between persons. When you have done that you will have done the first thing towards establishing your right to rule in Ireland, for the only foundation on which you can claim to rule her is the consent of the governed—the consent of the Irish people.

Question put, "That this House do now adjourn."

(11.20.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 220; Noes 281.—(Div. List, No. 123.)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

PURCHASE OF LAND AND CONGESTED DISTRICTS (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 199.)

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA CONSTITUTION (RE-COMMITTED) BILL.—(No. 112.)

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

(11.39.) SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I do not know whether the Government intend to proceed with this very important Bill at this time of the night. The measure involves the most important considerations, and I think the Committee will be very slow to deal with the affairs of this enormous tract of country in the short time now at our disposal.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not entitled to discuss the Bill as a whole.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: What I was about to do was to suggest that at 20 minutes to 12 o'clock it was impossible to do justice to the Bill. I think it will be better that I should move to report Progress, and I beg to do so.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Sir G. Campbell.*)

*(11.40.) THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): We cannot consent to report Progress. Almost the whole House, with the exception of the hon. Member, desire that the very great labours of the Committee which has sat on the Bill should bear fruit.

(11.41.) MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I entirely concur in the desirability of hastening the passage of the Constitution of Western Australia. The questions which have to be raised before the Bill passes through the House are, however, of such importance that I think my hon. Friend is justified in asking that more than a quarter of an hour should be devoted to discussing them. The question is, whether emigrants should have their fair share in the future of that country. I think that question will lead to long discussion, and to my mind the Government would do wisely in assenting to the suggestion that has been put forward.

(11.42.) MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): In this matter I am certainly of the same opinion as the First Lord of the Treasury, and I hope my hon. Friend (Sir G. Campbell) will not press his Motion. This Bill was fully discussed on the Motion for the Second Reading. It has been submitted to a very strong Select Committee, the members of which were most assiduous in their attention and unanimous in their judgment as to the most important parts of the measure. My hon. Friend behind me did not vote upon the point which he is now apparently going to contend for. In the Committee he had an opportunity, of which I think he cannot deny he amply availed himself, of raising all questions. I think that in a matter of this kind, in which the Australian colonists are greatly concerned, when the Governor of Western Australia is detained in this country because the Bill is not passed, when all the colonists are of one mind in urging the passage of the Bill as soon as possible, we ought to allow the measure to get through the House as soon as possible.

(11.44.) MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I think there would be a good deal in the observations of my right hon. Friend if it were possible to pass the Bill this evening. It is, however, hardly worth while to commence it at this late hour. It seems to me that it would be almost an insult to the Australian colonists to take the Bill piecemeal—discussing it for 10 minutes on one night and 10 minutes on another. I think the Government are bound to bring it on at a reasonable hour. We shall gain nothing by merely commencing the discussion this evening. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir G. Campbell) has many observations to make on the Bill, and the only result of going on with the Committee stage to-night will be that the Government reply to his speech will have to be postponed till another day, and then his observations will probably be repeated by someone else. I observe that in the case of discussions at this time at night, when an hon. Member states his reasons, no answer is given to him on that day, and practically, as far as time is concerned, nothing is gained by hon. Gentlemen making observations. Under these circumstances, it is hardly worth while to prolong discussion now, and I would urge the First Lord of the Treasury, out of respect to the Australian colonists, to put down the Bill for an earlier hour some other evening.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I protest against the passing of the Third Reading this evening. There is one question which alone will take several hours to discuss—namely, the proposal to grant a pension of £333 to Mr. Wharton, in spite of the protest of the Western Australian people.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): The hon. Gentleman speaks of a protest. I do not know anything of such a protest.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: I have the protest.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: No such protest has been made to Her Majesty's Government, and I cannot admit that a document such as that stated by the hon. Member to be in his possession can, on that ground, be assumed as coming within the cognisance of Her Majesty's Government. Of course I cannot discuss the question of Mr. Warton's pension on the Motion to report Progress.

*MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I entertain the greatest possible respect for the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley), but on this occasion I hope the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy will persevere with his Motion. It is monstrous to proceed with a measure of this kind at 10 minutes to 12 o'clock. If there were no other reason for delaying the consideration of this measure, I think the rumours which have been in circulation during the last two or three weeks with reference to the objects of the promoters of the Bill form a reason. We know what has been going on in many of the Australian colonies, and we are anxious to prevent the same evils arising in Western Australia. I do not say the rumours are true, but it has been said that the Bill is promoted by a number of land grabbers. It is well that such a rumour should be disproved, if possible. Those of us who entertain broad views on the question of land tenure reform will stoutly resist any attempt on the part of a handful of men to obtain possession of the land of Western Australia. I think it would be most unfortunate for this country, as well as for the colonists themselves, that the Bill should be passed without the most serious deliberation.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith, &c.): I opposed the Second Reading of the Bill because I thought the measure was proposed in great haste and without due consideration, and because the principle upon which it proceeded was not one which commended itself to my mind. But as a strong Select Committee has reported in favour of the Bill, and in view of the fact that every Australian Legislature has passed a unanimous vote in favour of the Bill, I am not prepared to pursue my opposition any further. At the same time, I think the demand that the measure should be brought on at an early hour some other evening is a reasonable one.

*SIR R. N. FOWLER (London): I agree very much with the view expressed by the hon. Gentleman. I was not in favour of the Bill originally, but, considering that the Australian colonists are unanimous in favour of the measure, it seems to me there is only one course open to the House, and that is to press the Bill. I think, too, that it ought to be taken at any hour.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: As reference has been made to the Select Committee, I think it right to say that although we had ample opportunity of discussing some parts of the Bill, we had not sufficient opportunity of discussing the most important portion of the Bill, namely, the disposal of the temperate southern lands. If the Government think it worth while to go on, I shall not further resist them.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I am sure the Members of the Select Committee who are present will bear me out when I say that the statement made by the hon. Gentleman, that the last portion of the Bill was not adequately discussed, is absolutely without foundation. There was no sort of impediment put on the discussion of the Bill. If hon. Members will take the trouble to read the Report, they will see that a large portion, a disproportionate amount of the time of the Committee was occupied by the observations of the hon. Member himself. So far from any check being put on the discussion of the Bill in the Select Committee, I give the statement the most unqualified denial.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: Ten sittings were held to take evidence on the Bill, and the discussion of the Bill is limited to one sitting. I assent that a great part of the time was occupied in considering whether the northern lands should be reserved. When we come to what I think is the serious part of the Bill, the question of making over to the present inhabitants of the colony the temperate southern lands, Members commenced to pack up their papers; not 10 minutes were given to the discussion.

(11.57.) DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I observe that the Government are pursuing their usual tactics, namely, dragging on at a late hour of the night a measure dealing with an important colony. They actually condescend to devote three or four minutes to the consideration of a Bill which really gives a new Constitution to Western Australia. Irish Members have the utmost respect for anything that falls from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley), but in some matters, notably in colonial matters, we have to consult very largely the opinions of our constituents, and I assure the hon. Gentleman the Member for Kirkcaldy that if he had not moved to report Progress, I should have felt it my duty to do so.

It being midnight, the Motion for Progress lapsed without Question put;

and the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee to sit again to-morrow.

INDIAN COUNCILS BILL [LORDS] (No. 197.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Second Reading be deferred till Thursday."—(*Sir John Gorst.*)

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I think the Government ought to state when this Bill will be taken. There was a distinct promise given on the part of the Government that the Debate on this Bill should be taken between Easter and Whitsuntide, but that has been departed from. I do not wish to put the Government in an unfair position, but I received notice late on Saturday night that the Bill was to be taken to-day, and that is not a fair carrying out of the arrangement that Members should have due notice of the Bill coming on. It should be set down as the first or second Order, for there must be a real Debate upon the Second Reading, and I would ask the right hon. Gentleman in charge if there is no intention of taking the Bill on Thursday, to put it down for a later day.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I desire to confirm what has been said by the hon. Member. This is really a very important matter, and, in view of the interest the question excites in India, I hope the Government will make arrangements for a reasonably long Debate of three or four hours.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): It was the intention to take the Second Reading to-day, and if business had followed its usual course I have no doubt we should have been able to do so. I would suggest that the hon. Member for Northampton should to-morrow put a question on the subject to my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Then Thursday is merely the *pro formâ* postponement, not a fixture?

Question put, and agreed to.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

SUPERANNUATION (WAR DEPARTMENT) BILL.—(No. 297.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I object.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): No, no.

DR. TANNER: I was under the impression this was a Government measure, but I find it is promoted by the hon. Member for Woolwich, and I make no objection.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time." —(*Colonel Hughes.*)

MR. BEAUFOY (Lambeth, Kennington): I do not rise to object to the Second Reading, but I would ask the Government if they can see their way to make a small extension and bring within the scope of the Bill two persons who now consider themselves suffering under an injustice by the existing state of things. Two men were employed in the Seamen's Registry Office of the Board of Trade, and were led to expect in the same way as *employés* in the Army Department that they would receive pensions on retirement. I do not say that the promise was made to them in so many words, but neither was it denied in the same manner. As it is, after 28 years' service they find themselves retired with the magnificent sum of £48 5s. as compensation. I would urge the Treasury to make a concession so far as to include these two men in the Bill; it will be an act of justice and will confer great happiness on two deserving public servants.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): No, Sir, it is not possible to accept the suggestion. The Bill deals with one class only, and the claims have been very carefully considered.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

LOCAL TAXATION (CUSTOMS AND EXCISE) DUTIES BILL.—(No. 244.)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Committee be deferred till to-morrow."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Sir W. HARCOURT (Derby): I should like to ask what course the right hon. Gentleman means to take to-morrow. Supposing the Speaker leaves the Chair, does he propose to proceed with the clauses in Committee to-morrow?

*The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Yes, Sir; that is the intention of the Government.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I should like to ask you a question, Mr. Speaker. I observe there are three or four Instructions put down on the Paper; one most important. I should like to ask whether they are in order or not?

*Mr. SPEAKER: It is unusual to ask a question of that kind until the Order is reached, and about to be proceeded with, but I may say that the instruction of the noble Lord the Member for Paddington is in order.

Question put, and agreed to.

Committee deferred until to.morrow.

SUPPLY—REPORT.

Resolution [6th June] reported.

EDUCATION ESTIMATES.

Class IV.—Education, Science, and Art.

"That a sum, not exceeding £2,182,224, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1891, for Public Education in England and Wales, including Expenses of the Education Office in London."

Resolution agreed to.

ALDERSHOT ROADS BILL.—(No. 298.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): I hope the House will agree to the Second Reading of this Bill now. Shooting has been carried on at Aldershot with some danger to the public, and this Bill provides for making a new road for the benefit of the locality, obviating all danger. I have conferred with representatives of the locality, and I do not believe there is any difficulty in the matter.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Brodrick.*)

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I have no quarrel with the roads, but I have an objection to Government business being carried on after 12 o'clock.

Second Reading deferred till to-morrow.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACTS AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 239.)

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 2.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

DIRECTORS' LIABILITY BILL.—(No. 60.)

Order for Consideration of Bill read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Consideration of this Bill be deferred till Wednesday."

*Mr. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I think it was agreed that this Bill should not be taken until after the Companies Winding-Up Bill, which had been put down for Monday next. May I suggest that this Bill should be set down for the same day.

*The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Sir M. Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.): If the hon. Member in charge of the Bill wishes that the Bill should be set down for Wednesday, I think it should be deferred to that day. It is not a Government Bill, and it does not follow that it will be taken before the Winding-Up Bill.

*Mr. H. H. FOWLER: It will be an advantage to deal with the other Bill first, and the Bills are so connected that we cannot deal with this Bill first.

*Mr. BARING (London): As I sat in the Committee upstairs on both Bills, I can say that the right hon. Gentleman is mistaken; the Bills are wholly independent of each other.

*Mr. SPEAKER: It is usual to observe the instruction of the hon. Member in charge of a Bill as to the date of postponement.

Consideration, as amended, deferred till Wednesday.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS AMENDMENT (RE-COMMITTED) BILL.—(No. 290.)

*Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I hope I may ask the House to proceed with this stage of the Bill. There is, I think, no objection.

Mr. SEXTON : The hon. Member, I believe, accepts the Amendment we suggested on the last occasion ?

*Mr. F. S. POWELL: I accept that Amendment.

Mr. J. KELLY (Camberwell, N.): I must press my objection.

Dr. TANNER : I withdraw any objection I have made.

Committee deferred till Wednesday.

TREES (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 70.)

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 2.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 9, after the word "shall," to insert the words "subject as hereinafter mentioned."—(*Mr. Macartney.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Dr. TANNER: I sincerely hope the hon. Member who has proposed this Amendment will not insist upon it. It will be a great injustice and inconvenience to tenants to insist upon their travelling long distances for the purpose of registering. I hope the hon. Gentleman will withdraw the Amendment which in an ill-advised moment he moved. It was a similar Amendment that wrecked the Bill on a former occasion, and indeed it would make the Bill worthless. I hope the hon. Member will see fit to withdraw the Amendment, which I cannot accept, and I cannot suppose the hon. Member really believes this is in the interest of the tenant farmers.

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): I do not wish to detain the House. I cannot accept the view of the hon. Member, and must insist on my Amendment.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

ANGLESEY ASSIZES AND QUARTER SESSIONS BILL.—(No. 248.)

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses agreed to.

Preamble.

Amendment proposed,

In line 2, to leave out all after "that," to "county," in line 5, and insert "it may be lawful to hold assizes and quarter sessions for the county of Anglesea elsewhere than at Beaumaris."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Stuart Wortley, Sheffield, Hallam): It must be observed that in allowing this Bill to proceed the Government give no undertaking that the Assizes shall be removed from Beaumaris to any other place in Anglesey until the Home Office is satisfied that proper accommodation has been made at such other place for prisoners awaiting trial.

Amendment agreed to.

Bill reported as amended; to be considered to-morrow.

PLACES OF WORSHIP (SITES) BILL. (No. 115.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 262.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire): This Bill is simply to remove an anomaly in certain burghs in Scotland where a portion only of the Act of 1862 has been adopted, and a considerable part of the electors are omitted from the Municipal and County Council franchise. It is really an extension of the franchise.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Marjoribanks.*)

Dr. TANNER: After an assurance from a leader of our Party, which I unreservedly accept, I offer no objection.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

OPEN SPACES BILL [LORDS].—(No. 303.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

*Sir J. LUBBOCK (London University): There is no new principle in this Bill, it is merely to remove certain difficulties to enable authorities to take over open spaces outside their own area. The

Bill has been carefully considered in another place, and it is in print.

DR. TANNER: I object.

Bill deferred till to-morrow.

SALARIED SHOP ASSISTANTS' WEEKLY HALF-HOLIDAY BILL.—(No. 203.)

SECOND READING. ADJOURNED DEBATE.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [29th April.]

*MR. MAPLE (Camberwell, Dulwich): If the House will agree to read the Bill a second time I will do my best to secure it being sent to a Select Committee, together with the Bill of the hon. Baronet opposite.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.): I have a strong opinion against the Bill; but I should be content if it were submitted to a Committee upstairs.

*SIR J. LUBBOCK: I hope the House will agree to refer the two Bills to a Committee.

MR. TOMLINSON: I object.

Debate further adjourned till Monday next.

SHOPS (WEEKLY HALF-HOLIDAY) BILL.—(No. 131.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

*SIR J. LUBBOCK: I hope there will be no objection to the Second Reading, upon the understanding that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): I must maintain my objection. I understand that there is no likelihood of a Committee being appointed. My objection would be removed if I had an assurance on the point.

MR. CONYBEARE: Can the Government give us any assurance as to whether a Committee will be appointed or not?

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

ROCHESTER BISHOPRIC BILL. (No. 228.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): This is a very innocent Bill, its object simply being to enable the Bishop of Rochester to have his residence in any part of his diocese, instead of compelling him to reside in the County of Surrey.

Objection taken, Second Reading deferred till to-morrow.

MOTIONS.

EAST INDIA (CIVIL SERVANTS).

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Select Committee be appointed to consider and report upon the alleged grievances of the Uncovenanted Civil Servants of India arising from the change in the relative value of gold and silver money and their leave and pension rules."—(*Sir J. Gorst.*)

MR. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I object to the Motion, and it may perhaps save the right hon. Gentleman inconvenience if I intimate my intention to oppose the Motion every night, though I have to attend for that purpose only.

Motion deferred till to-morrow.

WATER COMPANIES' CHARGES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Causton, Bill to regulate and limit the powers of Water Companies in respect of their Charges for the supply of Water, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Causton, Mr. Beaufoy, Mr. Thomas Henry Bolton, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Howell, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Rowlands, and Mr. James Stuart.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 332.]

REGISTRATION OF ASSURANCES (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Bill to consolidate and amend the Laws relating to the Registration of Deeds and Judgments, and to provide for the Registration of other Assurances, Acts, and Matters affecting Land in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney General for Ireland and Mr. Arthur Balfour.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 333.]

LOCAL REGISTRATION OF TITLE (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Bill to establish Local Registries of Titles to Land in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney General for Ireland and Mr. Arthur Balfour.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 334.]

House adjourned at half after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 10th June, 1890

WESTERN AUSTRALIA CONSTITUTION BILL.

Message to the Commons for copy of the Reports, &c., of the Select Committee.

FACTORS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

A Bill to extend the provisions of the Factors Act, 1889, to Scotland—Was presented by the Lord Watson; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Tuesday next. (No. 108.)

FOREIGN JURISDICTION (CONSOLIDATION) BILL.

A Bill to consolidate the Foreign Jurisdiction Acts—Was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 109.)

THE SWEATING SYSTEM.

ADJOURNED DEBATE.

Order of the Day read for resuming the adjourned Debate on the Motion of the Lord Kenry (*E. Dunraven and Mount-Earl*) to resolve—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, legislation with a view to the amelioration of the condition of the people suffering under that system is urgently needed."

Debate resumed accordingly.

*THE EARL OF WEMYSS: My Lords, I was in hopes that this Debate might have closed last night, and that it would not have been necessary for me to ask your Lordships' indulgence; but I, in obedience to what I believed to be the wish of the House, ventured to move the adjournment of the Debate. In common, I have no doubt, with most, if not all, of your Lordships who attended the Debate last night, I listened with much interest and curiosity to the speech of my noble Friend, whose notice stood first on the Paper. I listened to it with interest and curiosity, because the proceedings of this Committee have been mysterious and strange. Indeed, I almost think there is hardly a parallel case to what occurred last night—two successive Chairmen of the same Committee fighting a duel across the House over the Report which had been laid upon the Table by that Committee. And I do not think, my Lords, that this matter becomes less mysterious when we come to look at the Reports of the Committee and that drawn up by my noble Friend Lord Dunraven, because, between the Reports themselves, with the exception of one paragraph of Lord Dunraven's, which refers to adult labour—in reference to which I am glad to see he quotes the Trades Union authorities as to State non-interference with adult male labour—there practically is little, if any, material difference. And certainly from the speech of my noble Friend on my right, who replied, we did not gather any reason why there had been such strange proceedings in the Committee, that the Chairman thought it necessary to resign, finding himself in a minority of one, and that the Report is only the Report of the rest of the Committee. I cannot but think that hard measure has been dealt out to my noble Friend, and I would almost suggest to him that he should come back to the healthy climate of these Cross Benches, which he left some three or four years ago. However, we have nothing to do with the course which has been taken by my noble Friend, but we have a great deal to do with his Motion. Now, the Motion of the noble Earl asks vaguely and generally for legislation to remove evils which have been shown to exist under this so-called sweating system. My noble Friend told us last night that he would not say much about legislation, although his Resolution asks definitely for legislation to remove certain existing ills; but in his speech he spoke very strongly about those evils, and he used very strong terms in regard to what should be the action of Parliament in the matter. He said that he was dealing with the economical problem, and that it was for Parliament to find a remedy for the evil conditions of matters. Now, what are those evil conditions? As set forth last night by my noble Friend, they are, first, sub-contracting, and the existence of what he calls the unnecessary middleman; secondly, over competition; and, thirdly, foreign immigration. Those are the matters upon which he invites legislation, and it strikes me, my Lords, that it is legislation of a most heroic character which he asks your Lordships to undertake; legislation which is do away with what he calls the unnecessary middleman, which is to put a stop to competition, and which is to prevent unfair conditions in consequence of cheap foreign labour. Why, my Lords, Home Rule is a joke to that, and I doubt very much whether all the well-known skill in drafting of my noble Friend, Lord Thring, would be able to draw such Bills as would effectually give effect to such legislation. What I want to bring before your Lordships' House is this: What is the real nature of the evils which you have to contend with; and whether it is possible or not to remove those evils by legislation, as suggested by my noble Friend. Now I turn to the Report of the Committee, and I find that the causes of the evils are there set forth. They say, in substance, that the chief factors in producing sweating are the inefficiency of the poorer class of workers; early marriages; the helpless residuum in large towns; the low standard of life; excessive supply of cheap female labour; and married women working in their homes. Then the evils resulting are: inadequate wages; excessive hours; and insanitary conditions. I think my noble Friend, Lord Derby, will admit that that is a fair summary of what the Committee say are the causes of these evils; and they go on to say that skilled labour always obtains adequate wages. But there is another paragraph in the Report which I think is of great importance, referring to the excessive mortality among young children, and that is ascribed to early marriages. The Committee say that it is a common thing for boys and girls to marry at the age of 15, and to become parents when in a state not far removed from starvation. In the Report of my noble Friend Lord Dunraven, he also states how, in his opinion, the evils complained of have arisen from over-population, eagerness in competition, and the influx of foreign labour. With regard, then, to the great evils referred to, it is not simply a question of sanitation, or of the conditions under which the work is done; the root of these evils are a surplus population and low wages. We have now to see what are the remedies proposed by the Committee, and whether they will touch the evils pointed out by the draughtsmen of the Report. What are the remedies proposed? The remedies proposed are those of Co-operation and Combination. That is not a matter for legislation; it is a matter of arrangement among employers and among workers themselves. Then there is Sanitation, which is, no doubt, a matter your Lordships may deal with and legislate upon. Then there is the extension of the Factory Acts, the Registration of Workrooms, the increase of Inspectors, and the combination of authorities—that is to say, of Local Boards and other bodies which have to do with cognate matters; the recommendation is that they should be more combined in their operations than they are at present. Lastly, I come to a most important matter, namely, the question of State and Municipal Contracts. Now, my Lords, let us test the value of these suggestions. In order to properly test their value we must consider what is the effect which they will have upon the evils which the Committee and my noble Friend Lord Dunraven have pointed out as being the real evils—that is to say, Low Wages and Surplus Labour. I venture to say that not one of those suggested remedies which are referred to will touch these evils, except possibly the last, that is, the proposed way of dealing with State and Municipal Contracts. Of course, the extension of the Factory Acts and the Registration of Workrooms will not affect wages, nor will the recommendations as to Sanitation, unless you carry them to the extent proposed by the Bishop of Bedford, who proposes that some of these shops should be shut up absolutely, notwithstanding that the consequence would be that a great many of these poor people would be thus deprived of their means of living, and would have to go to the workhouse. Apparently he is quite prepared for that result; but I think that it is rather a curious remedy to propose, that in order to benefit one portion of the population another portion should be turned into paupers. So much for the way in which some of the suggestions as to Sanitation and Inspection would operate. Now, with reference to the question of State and Municipal Contracts, it is rather curious that neither of the noble Lords who spoke last night referred at all to this point, though it is, to my mind, by far the most important. Though it is by far the most serious point in the whole Report, my noble Friend on my right did not touch upon it at all. I want to know what regulation of State and Municipal contracts means, and upon that point I will refer to the Report itself. It is under the head of Government and Municipal Contracts, and a hope is expressed in the Report

> "That every precaution in their power will be taken to ensure fair and reasonable terms to the workers."

Now, my Lords, what does that mean? If it means anything it means that to every contract before it is taken—or rather that to every tender that is sent in to the State or to any Municipal Body a scale of prices and wages is to be affixed. If it does not mean that what does it mean? I asked the Chairman of the Committee what it means, and I have asked my noble Friend, Lord Thring, who drew the Report, what it means, but I cannot get an answer. However, I am perfectly certain of this, that it means in the end a Wages Court, and I think my noble Friend to whom we are indebted for the Land Court for Ireland will see that this is the beginning of that kind of legislation. When writing this paragraph his fingers must have itched to propose a Wage Court like the Land Court for Ireland, which was established, I think, in 1870. I ask, then, if it does not mean that, what does it mean? It is the first step towards the fixing of wages by Public Bodies and by the State. My Lords, this is called exceptional legislation, but we know what that means. It will very soon be seen that it is the germ of general legislation upon the subject. We have heard a great deal about germs in legislation, and we know very well what that means. What are the Municipal Bodies, the Local Boards, and the London County Council doing now? They are trying to become Traders; they are trying to deal in gas and water and all sorts of things; and if they are to get what the Socialists want, that is to say, all the instruments of production into their hands, and if you are to have this principle embodied in legislation, what will it mean? Why, that the State is also to fix the rate of wages. With that exception, I venture to say that these suggestions are practically worthless as regards the main evils alluded to, those being—I cannot repeat it too often—low wages and superabundant labour. No doubt much can be done for the comfort and well-being of the working people by sanitation; but even the question of sanitation can be carried too far. We have heard a good deal about the name of Fawcett of late, and I may mention that the other day I came across a speech of Mr. Fawcett, delivered in 1878, when he resisted the over inspection of work-places and the over extension of the Workshops Act. In that speech he said that—

> "It would be perfectly intolerable to interfere with the home of every Englishman and Englishwoman in the way proposed; because the Bill, as it then stood, would give the Inspectors the right to knock at every man's door and ask if his wife and children were at work after 9 o'clock. Under the cloak of a Consolidation Bill that monstrous interference with individual liberty would be sanctioned, and care should be taken that that was not done."

Well, my Lords, all I hope is that whatever measure may be carried by way of sanitation, registration, increased inspection, or anything of that kind, with the view of adding to the healthiness of the places in which these poor people work and sleep, due care will be taken that the Inspectors are not to interfere with the sanctity and privacy of the homes of the working people of this country. That is, I think, a very important consideration for your Lordships. Now, this being the position of things in reference to the extension of Sanitation, there is little else, as I have said, that Parliament can do. I have ventured to put down an Amendment pointing out what it seems to me ultimately to come to. Believing, as I do, that the real evils are evils which Parliament cannot touch, I am anxious that your Lordships should not commit yourselves to vague promises of legislation to benefit the people who are suffering in this way—promises which it would be utterly impossible for your Lordships to fulfil. Do not suppose for one moment that I feel less than any of your Lordships in this House for the sufferings and privations to which these poor people are exposed. But the evils which the State can cure are very few; and if you follow all the legislation of this kind which has taken place, whether you look at the legislation in regard to Irish land, the legislation for the improvement of the sanitary condition of the people, or to the Factories and Workshops Act, you will find that failure in a great measure follows your legislation, and that an Act is no sooner passed than it has to be supplemented by another Act, to be followed by further Acts. This is my answer to my noble Friend Lord Salisbury, who made a speech the other day in which he rather took the line that we must go on in the course we have been following. My point is that you do not succeed in what you are attempting to do, and you always have to endeavour to supplement your legislation by further Acts which will interfere more or less with the self-reliance of the people. I do not think it is by telling the people of this country that Parliament is to do everything, and that they have not the matter in their own hands that you can succeed; or by leading them to think that legislative interference is a panacea for all ills. True statesmanship consists, I believe, in telling the people that the cure rests with themselves—that was the line taken by my noble Friend Lord Derby last night—that they have the cure in their own hands by the practice of temperance and thrift, and by abstaining from early marriages, and not marrying until they have the means of keeping in comfort their wives, and those whom they bring into the world, as the upper and middle classes mostly do; but here you have it stated, in the passage I have referred to, that boys and girls of 15 marry, and infants themselves bring other infants into the world whose only lot is to be born paupers and to go on the rates. For that evil of over population I believe the remedy is emigration. A well-known statesman has, I believe, said that emigration is banishment. I venture to think that what we ought to teach the people of this country—a country which has peopled the world by emigration—is that emigration ought not to be looked upon as banishment, but as one of the means of reducing our surplus population; and that those who cannot find adequate labour and adequate reward for their labour in this country should endeavour to find in Greater Britain those opportunities which they have not been able to find in their native land. But, my Lords, be that as it may, I venture to think, as I have already said, that the duty of the statesman is to speak out the truth to the people, not to delude them with this panacea of legislation for every ill; nor, on the other hand, to throw up the sponge and take up the position of the fatalist, as was done in his speech, to which I have already referred, by my noble Friend the Prime Minister. I know that it is not the popular course to adopt the line which I am now taking, or the line which I ventured to take when last I addressed your Lordships upon this question of what the State can and cannot, or ought and ought not to do. I have been more or less laughed at and denounced in every newspaper from John O'Groat's to Land's End. My noble Friend Lord Salisbury, on the other hand, has been praised in every newspaper throughout England and Scotland. But who are they who praise my noble Friend the most? Why the Radical and Democratic papers—what I have ventured to call the Socialistic newspapers. I have here an extract from a paper, the character of which cannot be doubted—*Reynolds's Newspaper*. Here is what they say with reference to my noble Friend's speech. The paragraph is headed "Lord Salisbury a Socialist." I invite the attention of the noble Marquess particularly to this—

> "This is the new Socialistic, aristocratic policy. If any doubt remained on that score, the speech of Lord Salisbury has dispelled it. His was, indeed, a very notable speech, and it was also a plea in many parts of it for Socialism. It strikes many that this speech of Lord Salisbury's is a bid for the support of the Democracy."

Here you see, he is welcomed with open arms as a man and brother Socialist. Now, contrast that with the measure that is meted out to the humble individual who now has the honour to be addressing your Lordships' House: I have said that I have been attacked by every newspaper in the country; but there is some criticism which one would prefer to any praise that can be given, and I certainly would prefer, upon this great question of Socialism—(for it is the one great question of the day, blink it or not as you choose)—these attacks to the interested incense which has been so lavishly offered up to my noble Friend. An editor of a newspaper writes to me as follows:—

> "This very important question is terribly underrated by those who should know better. It

may interest your Lordship to know that the Social Democratic Club on Tuesday evening —the very day after the discussion which took place on this subject—passed a resolution in which you were vigorously denounced by the Socialist leaders as a dangerous person, and a source of possible future mischief to the Socialist cause."

Well, I would prefer that greatly to the praise of *Reynolds's* newspaper, of the speech of my noble Friend. All that one can do in this world, having strong convictions, is to abide by them, and through good and bad report to endeavour to make them plain. I would rather, my Lords, be a snag in the stream, even if it serves no other purpose than to show the force and volume of the flood, than be whirled along the rapids down to what I believe to be the inevitable Niagara of the not very distant Socialistic future. Your Lordships are, I think, to-day in this position: that you are asked, on the one hand to legislate where you think it possible to legislate for the removal of evils which must be removed in other ways than by legislation. If you assent to such a Motion as that, you only deceive those who look to you for guidance in this, that you lead them to believe that those evils are removable by legislation; and the result of their being disappointed, as they inevitably must be, will be far more discontent than there would be at the present time if you were to tell them frankly and boldly the truth. On the other hand, this course is open, as I think, to your Lordships: you can show your sympathy with these workers, and say that all which legislation can do you are willing to do for the improvement of their homes, and for their general sanitary state and well-being, but that you are not going to pass legislation which would lead to hopes which would inevitably be dashed. It is on this account that I have ventured to put my Motion on the Paper protesting against dealing with such evils as surplus population, and with the congested state of the labour market by any means except, perhaps, by encouraging emigration; but, at the same time, expressing your hearty sympathy with the sufferings of these people, your desire to improve their homes, and your readiness to do everything possible to attain these ends. That was my object in putting my Amendment on the Paper. I submit it to your favourable consideration, and I have only now to thank your Lordships for having so long and patiently listened to me.

Amendment moved,

To leave out all the words after "That" and insert "While sympathising with the workers in some trades in the Metropolis and elsewhere in the privations and hardships to which they are subject, as shown in the evidence taken before the Committee on the so-called 'Sweating' System, and while anxious, so far as possible, to remedy the evils from which they suffer through the insanitary and unfavourable conditions under which they work, this House is nevertheless of opinion that the evils of excessive competition and low wages, of which complaint is chiefly made, are due to the congested state of the labour market in the trades in question, which the improved sanitation and the appointment of additional inspectors, as recommended in the Report of the Committee, would in no way diminish or affect."—(The Lord Wemyss, *E. Wemyss.*)

*Lord THRING: My Lords, I wish to make a few observations, and but a very few observations, upon the speech which was made yesterday by Lord Dunraven, the Chairman of the Committee upon which he acted for two long years with the constant assistance and co-operation of his Colleagues. I think we have a right to complain that he deserted us, and that he should have occupied an hour and a half of your Lordships' time in attributing to the Committee every crime of which men could be guilty. What was the first accusation he made? I must deal with it, and I must answer it. He talked about the disappearance of a particular draft. What were the facts? I admit that the conclusions which I drew up were first issued for private circulation in the form of a Private Paper. I admit that I afterwards modified them at the suggestion of Lord Derby, and that I afterwards greatly enlarged them. Then, my Lords, what happened was this: The clerks at the Table thought that those conclusions were no part of the Report, and I did not think fit, therefore, to include them as part of the Report. I have no objection to the noble Lord using them in any way he chooses; but to say that I wish to suppress them is merely imputing to me conduct which no Member of this House will ever think I was guilty of. Then, my Lords, came another personal imputation, and to that I plead in the fullest degree guilty. The noble Lord said that I took undue advantage of the help of my Colleagues in the preparation of my draft. I admit that, without the assistance of my Colleagues, Lord Monkswell, Lord Clifford, and Lord Sandhurst, who prepared the whole summary of the evidence, I could not have produced the Report. I admit that my dull and imperfect sight would not have enabled me to go through the three or four volumes of evidence. I admit to the full the kindness and courtesy with which my colleagues treated me. I believe the Report to be a very good Report; and though I must say it is in great part due to them, I will in no degree shrink from the responsibility for every statement which is made in it. I went through every statement of my noble Friends, and I therefore admit myself, to the full, as responsible as any of them. So much for the personal insinuations. But what has the noble Lord ventured to say to the House? He has told you that we have suppressed evidence. What object had we, I should like to know, in suppressing evidence? He says, in regard to sub-contracting, that we did not give it sufficient prominence. There was an initial blunder in the Reference which the noble Lord induced us to accept. The noble Lord said we were to inquire into the system of sweating. We had not sat a week or a fortnight before we found out that there was no system of sweating. We found that there were conditions of labour appalling in their misery, but that there was no system of sweating; that sub-contracting had nothing to do with it. We found out that in many trades where there was no sub-contracting whatever, all the conditions of sweating existed, long hours, low wages, and every description of misery. We were told at the beginning by Mr. Arnold White, who was the Corypheus prominent among the witnesses, that sweating did not necessarily mean sub-contracting, but that it meant "grinding the faces of the poor." What did that mean? It meant that sweating was a nickname which was applied to these appalling conditions. And yet we are told that we did not talk enough about it, and that we wanted to suppress the evidence with regard to sub-contracting. Then we were told we did not give sufficient prominence to the question of competition. It is almost childish to make such an accusation. What could such witnesses as we examined say about competition that was not obvious to every one? Is it to be supposed that my Colleagues, some of the most prominent Members of your House, wished to conceal the fact that competition among employers would raise wages, and that competition among the unskilled workers would lower wages? What possible object was there in our dilating on competition? It had nothing to do with our conclusions: and the object of our Report was, if possible, to give practical guidance for the purpose of legislation. Then came the third accusation, which was equally unfounded—that we suppressed evidence with respect to the influx of foreigners. My Lords, I am well aware that this influx of foreigners is in some degree unpopular. I am aware that there is a strong prejudice existing against the influx of foreigners. But how can it be said that we have attempted to hide it? All we said was, and I challenge the noble Lord Dunraven to prove the contrary, that this influx of foreigners was, in our opinion, a small thing, having regard to the enormous quantity of female and other unskilled labour in the market. Then, my Lords, I would ask, when we are told that the influx of foreign labour is the cause of the appalling misery among our poorer classes, what are the facts? When the Jews come over here, they never fall upon the rates; they are entirely supported by the Jewish Board of Guardians. Although when they first come they are uncleanly and untidy in their habits, they are industrious, and their children are brought up in one of the best schools in England. They receive, both men and women, the highest possible character from the witnesses who spoke in regard to the conduct of the Jews. What ground is there for saying that we suppressed evidence? We put forward as clearly as we possibly could both the dark shades and the bright lights as appearing upon the evidence. Now, my Lords, I must say a few words upon another matter. Nothing has been said, as far as I understand, as to why the Report of the noble Lord was rejected. The Report of the noble Lord was rejected, I must tell your Lordships because it was irregular and unusual in form; because it contained contradictory statements; because it used language which was thought unnecessarily strong; because it was in such a form that we could not distinguish conclusions from evidence, and it was, therefore, impossible to sign it in that form. I must give you a few of the inconsistencies, because they all bear upon this question of sweating. I will refer to paragraph 10, where the noble Lord says, that the two chief causes of sweating are, over-competition and foreign immigration. Then he says, two or three paragraphs further on, that the sweating consisted in the substitution of unskilled for skilled labour and the use of machinery—that, in one word, competition is the root of the evil. Then, in his speech yesterday, the noble Lord stated that the evil was due to the unnecessary number of middlemen and the system of sub-contracting; but in his own Report, in paragraph 195, he says that the causes of sweating are, in the main, natural and intrinsically wholesome. The chief reason we could not sign that Report was that it contained so many inconsistencies and so many strong observations. And what did we do? In the first place, we implored him to alter it; we begged him to consider it in the vacation. I myself asked him, if it was a mere question of settling the evidence, whether he would not sit down and settle it with us. But what does he do? He comes here and makes these charges, while, if he had only sat with us for a few minutes in conversation over the Table, we could have introduced the evidence the noble Lord accuses us of suppressing. He knew, and all my Colleagues will support me in saying this, that we were not in the slightest degree anxious to give one colour or the other to the case; all we were anxious about was that we should have an impartial, clear, and just statement of the evidence, and then, if we disputed, we should dispute upon the conclusions. I challenge my noble Friend to say whether it was fair to his Colleagues to pick out certain omissions in the evidence, and then charge us with suppressing them when, if he had chosen to spend 10 minutes with us in conversation over the Table in the Committee Room, every objection he had could have been removed. Then as to the conclusions of the Report. The matters to be dealt with were low wages, the influx of foreigners, and sanitation. As to low wages, I do not agree with Lord Wemyss that I was anxious to draw a Bill either to lower or to raise wages. It is true the witnesses who came before us thought we had power to raise or lower wages; but we came, in effect, to the same conclusion as the noble Lord, that the only way the question of wages could be dealt with was by a full and well-considered combination; in other words, that the people themselves must deal with the question by co-operation. Then with regard to the influx of foreigners. The noble Lord has throughout his Report and his speech whispered—for I cannot say it was anything more—hints that the Legislature ought to deal with this question of the influx of foreigners; in other words, that we ought to prohibit the poor Russians who have escaped from Russia coming for refuge to England. I would rather that any number of refugees should come to England than that we should prohibit the entrance into the country of men who, flying from persecution when they come here, are no burden whatever upon our people. Then I come to the last point, sanitation. What did we do with regard to that? We recommended that there should be an increase in the number of Inspectors, and greater stringency in enforcing the laws of sanitation. The only point upon which we differed from my noble Friend Lord Dunraven was that he recommended that every house in which people worked should be subjected to the Factories and Workshops Act. With reference to the increase in the number of Inspectors which we recommended, I am in great doubt as to how far that should go. I am aware, as everybody is who is behind the scenes in these matters, that inspection is a very dangerous weapon; that it leads to petty tyranny and petty interference, and that there is nothing which so rouses the feelings of people against the law as interference with their homes. I do not say it is not necessary. I have said, and my Colleagues have said, that we think it is necessary that there should be an increase in the number of Inspectors; but to say that every workman's house in the country is to be placed under the Factory Law is, in my opinion, to say that England is to be placed under a system of petty tyranny, and nothing would ever induce me to consent to such a thing or to refrain from raising my voice against it. Such, my Lords, is the whole result of these charges which the noble Lord Dunraven has chosen to make against his Colleagues on the Committee. I say the only difference between us is this: there is no difference in the conclusions except in regard to this matter of visiting the houses of poor workmen; there is no difference whatever between us except in regard to that. Then, my Lords, I will say a few words upon another point. We have been told that our Report is not drastic enough; but our Report contains everything which the Report of Lord Dunraven contains. I believe with my noble Friend Lord Wemyss—

> "Of all the ills that human hearts endure,
> How small the part that laws can make or cure."

What it is possible for legislation to do we have recommended in the clearest possible terms. With regard to the rest, I think the Report has been of very great use. It has brought home to the hearts and consciences of employers that they owe a duty to their workpeople, and that it is not right to wring the uttermost farthing out of them which can be wrung out of them by the exigencies of the market. I hope, also, we have brought home to the hearts and consciences of purchasers of goods that they ought not always to look to cheapness, but that they may sometimes well consider that that cheapness is bought by the misery of the workers. We have taught them that fair prices may not only secure good goods, but that they may be doing good in paying them. These moral truths we have brought home to the hearts and consciences of men, and, to use the words which the Archbishop introduces at the end of our Report, we have done our best to encourage thrift and to raise the tone of living among the helpless inhabitants of the great towns of England.

*Lord MONKSWELL: My Lords, I desire to say a few words on the Motion before the House, not only as one of the members of the Committee, who took an active part in drafting the alternative Report, which was accepted, but also as representing on the London County Council a constituency in which sweating is rife. With reference to the observations which have been made by the noble Earl on the Cross Benches, I will say that I entirely agree with my noble Friend Lord Thring that we do not expect very much from legislation. We expect that a great deal more good will result from combination among the workers, and we also expect that a great deal of good will come from the awakening of the public conscience of which my noble Friend has just spoken. But I cannot altogether agree with the noble Earl when he tells us that this sanitary legislation will have no effect whatever in the way of increasing wages. I believe that indirectly, but not the less surely, sanitary legislation will have some effect in raising wages, because I believe it will conduce, to some extent, to the success of combination. My Lords, I believe that when the poor workers are ground down to the utmost—when they live in horrible, loathsome, and insanitary surroundings, the spirit is crushed out of them; and that if those surroundings are improved, they will pluck up a spirit and combine more than they do at present, and get better terms for themselves and their fellow-workers. Before I grapple, as I intend to do immediately, with some of the assertions of the noble Earl opposite, Lord Dunraven, I should like to say a few words as to a matter on which I believe there is some misapprehension in the minds of the public. Last August our conduct was very adversely commented upon in the Press in not having put forward our Report before the end of last year. I desire to say I wish the Committee could have seen their way to adopt a different course. I think it would have been of the utmost benefit if the Committee had seen fit to sit during the remainder of the Session, and to produce their Report before the end of it; but, considering the gigantic task before us, I cannot say that the Committee were unwise in not doing so, because, although the work might possibly have been done, it would not have been well done, and it would probably have been scamped. I only want to say one word in that connection, and it is this: that if any blame does attach to us for not putting forward our Report at the end of last Session, I consider that part of the blame—the largest share of the blame, as I think the noble Earl opposite will agree with me—must lie upon his shoulders, as I will explain to your Lordships. The Committee met regularly up to the end of May. What happened at the end of May was that the noble Lord deserted us for six weeks. Although the Committee was several times called together, the meetings were always put off. We only met three times after the end of May for the consideration of the evidence, and yet, not till the 5th August, did the noble Earl call us together to consider a Report dealing with this voluminous mass of evidence, upon a matter of such enormous importance. My Lords, I am very sorry to have to say this in your Lordships' House. I think that it would have come very much better from the noble Earl opposite himself. I am sorry I should be the first person to have to call attention in this House to the real reason why the Report was not put forward at the end of last Session. As regards the epitome of the evidence, it is somewhat of a personal matter between him and me, though I do not doubt the noble Earl himself did not intend it should be so; but it does so happen that nearly every one of the paragraphs in the Report which the noble Earl especially denounces was drafted by me and accepted by the Committee with very little alteration; and, therefore, if anybody is specially responsible for those conclusions and for that view of the evidence which the noble Earl denounces, it is myself. I entirely agree with the noble Earl that it is of the utmost importance there should be easily accessible to the public a correct epitome of the evidence. As he says, one cannot expect the public to wade through four Blue Books. So much did this consideration impress itself upon me that I may say I believed myself that the evidence was absolutely of more importance than the conclusions from it; for if we do legislate in the matter upon the lines laid down in this Report, I am perfectly certain that it is not the last word the Legislature will have to say on the subject, and in reference to other matters of this description. It is, therefore, a matter of the utmost importance for future social reformers that this Report should contain an absolutely correct and colourless epitome of the evidence as far as it goes. I was so impressed with that necessity in putting forward the Report that I did not take any part in criticising the noble Earl's draft, or in drafting the alternative Report until I had made an analysis of the whole evidence and a rough index of that analysis. Those operations took me at least 300 hours of hard work; and I must say this, that if I am mistaken in my epitome of the evidence, a great deal of which I should mention was drafted by Lord Sandhurst and Lord Clifford, it is not for want of having made the utmost endeavour to make the Report as accurate as it could possibly be made. Now, my Lords, the noble Earl first of all falls foul of us in the matter of sub-contracting, and he objects very much to paragraph 171, the first paragraph of the conclusions and recommendations in the Report. Well, the fact of the matter is, that he entirely misapprehends the whole drift of the paragraph to which he takes exception. The paragraph is very plain in its language; its meaning is perfectly clear. But what the noble Earl does is this: with very great skill he twists out of that paragraph a meaning which cannot possibly be assigned to it; and when he has assigned that meaning to it, he declares that the meaning so attributed to it does not form a correct epitome of the evidence. That paragraph is very short, and it is as follows:—

> "We have endeavoured to extract from the principal witnesses a clear idea of what they understood by the term 'sweating.' The replies received were neither clear nor consistent. It was urged by some that sweating is an abuse of the sub-contract system, and consequently that there can be no sweating where there is no sub-contracting. Others, on the contrary, maintained that sub-contracting is by no means a necessary element of sweating, which consists, according to them, in taking advantage of the necessities of the poorer and more helpless class of workers, either by forcing them to work too hard or too long, or under insanitary conditions, or for 'starvation wages,' or by exacting what some witnesses called 'an undue profit' out of their labour."

Now, my Lords, the only clear proposition laid down in that paragraph is that there are two classes of witnesses, one class of witnesses who say that sub-contracting is essential to sweating, and another class of witnesses who say that sub-contracting is not essential to sweating; and we say quite truly in the margin, because I have looked over the evidence again and again, that there are 12 witnesses who have a decided opinion one way and nine witnesses the other. How does the noble Earl meet that? He is entirely beside the mark in declaring that there are 83 witnesses who say that sub-contracting is a cause of sweating. Very likely they did, but this paragraph does not say more than that those nine witnesses all contended that sub-contracting is not a cause of sweating. That is a different proposition.

*THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN: Will the noble Lord tell me what paragraph that is?

*LORD MONKSWELL: Paragraph 171. So that the noble Earl's statement is entirely beside the mark; and the fact is, he has simply found a mare's nest. I will now go to paragraph 174, which raises a more important question, and it is to the following effect, so far as it was contested by the noble Earl—

> "It is enough to say that we considered our inquiry should embrace, first, the means employed to take advantage of the necessities of the poorer and more helpless class of workers."

He denied that that was within the scope of the inquiry. My Lords, I utterly and entrely deny that I or any member of the Committee ever gave his sanction to the statement in paragraph 6 of the noble Earl's draft Report that—

> "Your Committee confined their examination to those trades in which the existence of middlemen and sub-contractors was claimed to be an important factor in the case."

We did nothing of the sort; and if we had done anything of the sort we should, in my opinion, have done very unwisely. But I really do not think it is a matter of the slightest importance, because it is perfectly certain that the noble Earl did not, in point of fact, draw that distinctinction which he says he drew. It is perfectly certain the noble Earl did not stop the witnesses when they went on to describe phases of their experience which had nothing whatever to do with sub-contracting. He did not stop Miss Potter when she gave a list of prices paid to workers who were not under sub-contractors at all, nor did he stop the furniture hawkers who came forward and told us of their sad case. The furniture-hawkers, I may remind your Lordships, are people who hawk about furniture which they have made on the chance of being able to sell it, and who are ready to sell it wherever they can, either to a middleman or to a *bonâ fide* customer. In fact, the noble Earl does himself great injustice in this matter, for he did not take the extremely unwise course that he suggests in this Report. My Lords, I do not propose to say anything with regard to competition between employers beyond this. If the noble Earl looks at paragraph 68 of our Report he will find a reference to the excessive competition among small masters as being among the causes that conduce to sweating, in the opinion of some of the witnesses. Then, with regard to foreign pauper immigration. That is a very important part of the subject. Foreign pauper immigration is denounced up hill and down dale by the noble Lord in his Report, and it was denounced by him up hill and down dale again in his speech yesterday. The *Times'* report of that speech contains this sentence—

> "If it was desired that the British labourer should be put on something like a decent footing of existence it is absolutely necessary that some check should be placed on the importation of this cheap and generally destitute foreign labour."

When that declaration was made by the noble Earl in your Lordships' House it was cheered, and, of course, your Lordships expected that he would have had the courage of his convictions. The case against immigration cannot be put more strongly, and if the noble Earl is of opinion that some check should be placed on the immigration of foreign paupers he should have made some suggestion to your Lordships on that point. Why has not he had the courage of his convictions, and suggested on the fore-front of his Report that some legislative step should be taken in the matter? But he does not do anything of the kind. He draws back, and says that he has no remedy to recommend. Was ever such a lame and impotent conclusion put before any Legislative Assembly? The noble Earl found, when he came to draft his conclusion, that upon this subject public opinion is very much divided. Might it not have occurred to him that if public opinion was so very much divided, surely the evidence could not have been so almost entirely on one side, as he suggests. If the evidence upon the point was so very much on one side there would probably be very little difference of opinion among British workmen as to the necessity of legislation for these purposes. But the noble Earl says there is a great divergence of opinion upon the subject, and he is perfectly right. Now, my Lords, I should like to tell you some-about the opinion which prevails in the East End of London. Mr. Cremer represents in the other House the constituency which I represent on the London County Council, and he was on the Committee of the House of Commons which dealt with the question of the immigration of foreigners. Mr. Cremer and Mr. Bradlaugh, who were on the same Committee, opposed a suggestion made by a majority of the Committee that possibly a time might come when some preventive legislation might be desirable. Mr. Cremer has not been called to account for that by his constituents, and I think if there is one man more than another who understands the temper of the people of the East End of London it is Mr. Cremer. Then the noble Earl has made some rather small and technical objections to the conclusions in the Report, and, in particular, he falls foul of paragraph 65, and says the evidence is not correctly epitomised there with regard to what is called the "Greener-immigration" in the boot-trade. I will only say as to that that I have carefully gone through every one of the references, and I cannot find that in any respect the evidence does not agree with the epitome that has been given. Of course, some of the witnesses upon that subject were what may be called a little "wobbly," and if you merely take a question here and there some of the witnesses might be shown almost to have said anything; but if you take the whole of the evidence referred to in the margin I have come to the conclusion, from having gone carefully through it, that paragraph 65 does give a correct epitome of the evidence upon this matter. With regard to paragraph 71 of the Report, the noble Earl again falls foul of the Committee. He is very angry with the Committee for drafting that paragraph. It is this—

> "As regards the rise or fall in the remuneration of labour in the trade we feel ourselves unable on the evidence before us to express any opinion as to the course of prices in the lower branches of the boot-trade."

Now the evidence put forward by Lord Dunraven in his Report upon that matter is very one-sided. He gives very great prominence to the evidence on one side in favour of there having been a fall in prices, but he says very little indeed about the evidence on the other side. For instance, the noble Lord does not mention the evidence of Mr. Flatau, who is a very large manufacturer, evidence which seems to me to bear upon this point, and which ought certainly to be referred to in any Report of the Committee. Mr. Flatau tells us—

> "That the operative is better off since the introduction of machinery than he was 10, 20, or 30 years ago;"

and with regard to the fall in wages since 1880 he says—

> "In such cases one-third less labour would be bestowed on the boot, this third being subsequently done by machinery."

He also says—

> "The men do two-thirds of the work they used to do, and get a fraction more than two-thirds of the wages."

Another witness, Mr. Maddy, is stated in that paragraph to have given evidence that during the last two years he had increased the wages he paid, and had not noticed any tendency in wages to go down. The noble Earl quotes the other side of the evidence upon that point, but he does not quote the rebutting evidence of Mr. Flatau. Now my noble Friend, Lord Thring, has given several reasons why we rejected the noble Earl's Report, and I do not know that I need go further into that; but I should like to say a word or two as to the evidence in the boot trade. That has been so altered that I do not think in such a case the fondest parent could recognise his own child. I object to the noble Earl's epitome of the evidence given in the boot trade. There is no system in the arrangement adopted by the noble Earl. He takes a subject up and drops it, and takes it up again without apparent cause. With regard to the alleged deterioration of the quality of English goods, he minimises the effect of the evidence which tells against his view. He states that certain evidence almost stands alone; whereas if he turns to our Report he will find out that the evidence does not stand alone, but is corroborated by that of several other witnesses. That is one instance of a very strange character in the noble Earl's Report. He actually says in one paragraph that our colonial exports are falling off owing to bad workmanship, and he quotes the opinion of a witness to that effect; but there is counter evidence with regard to that of a very valuable character indeed, in fact the only evidence of any considerable value on that point, and that is the evidence of Mr. Giffen with regard to the imports and exports. Mr. Giffen produces statistics to show that so far from our foreign trade falling off it has been increasing at a very rapid rate; and I would call your Lordships' attention to the fact that a great deal of that foreign trade is colonial trade. But whether that is the case or not, surely, my Lords, it is very important, when we are discussing the question whether English work has or has not deteriorated, to find that, as a matter of fact, our goods are more than holding their own in the markets of the world; and yet there is absolutely no reference whatever even in the margin of the noble Lord's Report to those statistics, which were brought forward by Mr. Giffen. What, I ask, can possibly be the value of conclusions based upon an epitome of evidence of that kind? It is not of the slightest use to attempt to deal with this subject by exaggeration; if you do you will only find out, sooner or later, that it is far better to put the facts fairly before the public and allow them to draw their own inference. As your Lordships have seen, the points of difference between the noble Earl and myself are many, but I fully recognise the admirable motives which prompted him in drafting his Report, and I certainly would not have voted for its rejection without what I considered ample cause. I hope the noble Earl will give his assistance in helping forward the reforms advocated by the Committee which he is in favour of to the utmost of his power.

*THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, I am prepared to support the noble Earl behind me in the Resolution which he proposes to your Lordships, just as far as he is disposed to stand to it. I do think that legislation is required, and I believe that all the residuum of legislation which the noble Earl desires to see carried out or actually proposes would be assented to by the noble Earl on the Cross Benches. I believe there is but small difference between the two Reports, and I have examined them both carefully, except in the matter of form. The Committee, as has been fully explained, thought it necessary to reform the one presented to them, and did so, regretting the absence of their Chairman, who had conducted the examinations with great ability; but it was absolutely necessary to make clear what was evidence, and what was conclusion, and what recommendation, and without reforming the Report that could not be done. I shall not attempt to defend any further the Report, which has been, to my thinking, so excellently, so perfectly defended already. I shall say nothing of the imputations of fraudulence cast upon the Committee; it is a very strong word, and we are quite prepared to leave our characters to answer such an imputation as that. I will make one observation on the system of counting evidence. Nothing can be more unsatisfactory than to set a number of witnesses on one side against a number on the other, unless they are on something like a level as to knowledge of the subject. To count 83, or half that number, of poor working men and women, with their heads below water, asking themselves in their misery the cause of their poor wages and wretched homes, and to set their opinions against the opinions of three people who have considered the whole matter from the outside, who have, after considering the questions in many lights, gone among the workers, one of them having actually herself gone and worked for a time among the poor women themselves, is, I think, absurd to the last degree. What can be the value of the opinions of those poor people, reaching vainly after some vague idea as to the causes of their misery, against the opinions of experienced witnesses? How do your Lordships weigh the value of testimonials? You know perfectly well that you would give no weight to 100 imperfect testimonials as against the evidence of one person whom you could positively trust. Leaving that negative part of the Report, I should like to say a few words about its positive side—about what it does contain, and about the legislation which the noble Earl behind me does not go further than to recommend, but which the noble Earl on the Cross Benches would, I believe, thoroughly accept. The subject was divided last night into three portions—the subjects of sub-contracting, competition, and immigration; and we were told that the Report states that these three great phenomena have nothing to do with the sweating system. I can find nothing to that effect in any single passage of the Report. The whole Report is upon the effects of those three things. If, indeed, the noble Earl had taken those three lines one by one, and had laid before us the remedy which he proposes for each of them, if he had told us how he would do away with the mischiefs of sub-contracting, or the dangers of competition, or if he had treated foreign immigration in the way which we might have expected from his Report, he would, indeed, have rolled a great stone over us, and we should have to be silent for ever. But these treatments are only commonplaces if there is no remedy proposed. They are commonplaces with which everyone is acquainted, and it does not appear to me to be the business of your Lordships' Committees to dilate on commonplaces. If well-known evils are to be described in such connection it is that we may be told what are the remedies. The noble Earl proposes no remedy. As to the first and second questions, the sub-contracting and the competition, he is silent, and as to the other he does not recommend the only remedy which has been proposed by anyone. The Committee looked to remediable ills and to remedial measures. The Committee did not consider it to be its business to produce an essay on causes in regard to three such important subjects. It had to look for remedies for effects of a very serious and terrible kind, and, in treating the matter in that way, they had the support of a very great authority. I read in the writings of that great authority, treating upon this Report and upon the whole subject—

> "Causes cannot be treated; we must attack effects."

My Lords, that is the view the Committee have taken. They have not gone into the wide causes; they have attacked effects. The authority whom I am quoting explained in *Lloyd's Newspaper* on the 11th May, 1890

> "The sweating system, its effects and remedies, written specially for *Lloyd's* readers by the right hon. the Earl of Dunraven."

It does appear to me that the Report has exactly followed out that course which the noble Earl has said is the only way in which it can be treated, because we must attack effects. But the paragraph goes on to tell us exactly what those effects are—

> "The effects are, insufficiency of pay, food, air, and everything necessary to existence, unsanitary work places, filthy dwellings, a general degradation of labour below the point at which existence can be sustained at all, or, at any rate, below the point at which it can be sustained with any regard to health, and for the decencies of life."

That, my Lords, is the noble Earl's own summary of the effects which can be treated, and ought to be treated, and I say the Report does deal directly with every one of those effects, except insufficiency of pay, with which, however, it does deal indirectly, because it is our belief that if the other evils were cured the insufficiency of pay would be greatly affected too. Your Lordships will now allow me to draw attention to the two main facts which are before us with regard to what is to be remedied and the remedies proposed. We may broadly group them into two great divisions, one is the hideous conditions under which these poor people exist, and the other fact is that it is precisely the case of these people which has so far been left out of practical legislation. In former years there were other classes as badly off as these are now. Our Committee had no such evidence before them as that which was before the Committee on the Factory Acts. We cannot read, without horror, of children then working naked in coal mines, pushing along heavy weights of coal, which were facts with which the Committee on the Factory Acts had to deal in 1882. Again, my Lords, we have had nothing brought before us about children, between nine and 15 years of age, working from 4 o'clock in the morning till midnight. We have heard nothing of mothers being seen dragging crying children at midnight, in the depth of winter, into the print works. All these and many other horrors did exist in mills, mines, and factories upon a greater scale than anything that exists now under the worst conditions of the sweating system. And that is cured. We may say that it is more than cured. The very people whom the Factory Acts had to step in and assist then can now combine for self-protection; we may say more, they are now a great power in the State. What is the cause of the change? How was the change effected? I believe we may say it was effected altogether by the Factory Acts in series. The noble Earl said he could not understand the Factory Acts. But it is very evident from the history of the changes, and it is a great comfort, that somebody does understand them and their operation, because it is, undoubtedly, the fact that the working of the Factory Acts hasproduced enormously beneficial changes in the condition of a very large part of our population. When things were in the condition I have described, the law, taking a large view of things, insisted on two classes of responsibility; the responsibility of the owner of the premises, and of the employer of the people. That is the key to the whole of the factory and sanitary legislation. The Legislature made the employer responsible for the welfare of the persons employed by him, and for the actual payment of wages to the workers. That took in the whole of the Truck system, and the employer began to be responsible. When first mills and mines began to be inspected they belonged to the employer. The owner and employer were one person. The employer was made by the Sanitary Acts responsible as owner also for the state of the plant. That is a phenomenon which, in these cases under the sweating system, seldom occurs; the employer is very often as poor as the person he employs, and is never the owner. The owner is a person whom it is often very difficult to find; but the law which held the one person responsible is perfectly capable of holding two persons responsible. Those statutes are in existence, and profess to be acted upon in workshops, and the same responsibility should be enforced with regard to these small work-places. Not only are they utterly unwholesome.

We hear of the statutable tables of hours being put up in these rooms when the Inspector is expected, but usually being out of sight. The responsibility in regard to domestic workshops is, of course, at present *nil*. The Report urges that all those responsibilities should be clearer and recognised, and that the Legislature should insist upon their being discharged. I believe the Report touches upon every particular. It recommends that you should appoint such a number of Inspectors as will be really able to do the work, that you should give them power to enter places which they ought to enter without warrant, and that you should enable them to act together, which, under three different departments, is very difficult. It suggests that the County Councils would be very fit to undertake the management of this system of inspection. Then it suggests the necessary Amendments in the Acts; and it recommends registration of workrooms. I do not believe that that is so difficult a matter as is sometimes anticipated. Without interfering at all with domestic privacy, or any rooms which are simply dwelling rooms, these small workshops ought to be subject to inspection, as they are, for instance, in the colony of Victoria. The Act in force in the Colony of Victoria gives a very clear definition of places which may properly come under that description, without giving power to enter places which are merely dwellings of families; it creates exemption for work-rooms where it can be shown that all the persons engaged there are connected by blood, or by marriage, or in which steam power is not employed. These various recommendations simply bring to bear upon these present conditions of labour the remedies which have already acted with such good effect in the case of the factories, mines, and mills of England. Then, with regard to the sanitary officers, the independence of their appointment should be secured, their numbers and powers increased. That is the real way of dealing with these matters, and not by leaving their appointments to the persons whom they have to overlook, the owners of these very houses assembled in their vestries. What is wanted now, my Lords, in the way of legislation is simply that the first two plain steps should be taken, and taken energetically, to make owners and to make employers responsible. Then, after that, if they fail to produce the effect they have produced elsewhere it will become patent what other steps should be taken. If the Committee had recommended that competition should be dealt with the Greek Kalends would be here before one remedy would be applied. The first steps are easy, and I think that not a month should be lost in drawing a Bill for the purpose. In the cause of the weak it should be taken in hand at once. As to foreign immigration the noble Earl has said there should be no immigration allowed. Exclusion is not a very heroic remedy, and what would be the result if it were carried out? Exclusion, if carried out, would require expulsion too. Is it proposed that that measure, too, should be carried out in free England? Are we to see men wandering, as some of the witnesses told us they had wandered in Russia, from one city to another, being thrown from each, and told "There were enough Jews there already, and that they must go elsewhere to find a city in which there was room for one more?" That is the way in which exclusion works in other countries. Among the Jews who come to us are some of the thriftiest, soberest, and most orderly of our population. Foreign immigrants have founded in this country some of our best trades. Those old immigrants were not all unskilled workmen, neither are all these unskilled workmen. It is to be remembered, also, that exclusion might carry away trade of vast importance from our own people, and leave our own people unable to obtain even the scanty subsistence which they obtain now. We were told by some of the witnesses who came before the Committee, that no little trade now remaining with us was carried on in a very hesitating manner, that our hold on it was but slight, and that very little was wanted to sweep it from our shores. I hope the steps recommended by the Committee will be taken with vigour. Due responsibility must be laid upon owners and employers, and technical education must be encouraged. Above all things, my Lords, benevolent zeal must go on to do its work. There are many living among the poorer people now who set them noble examples, who bring them into reading-rooms, afford them the means of recreation, provide for them classes, and give them assistance toward self-help of every sort and kind. And they do change the habits of these poor people, and raise them to a higher standard. The sympathy with them and the interest in the subject which I believe this Report will produce will go far to benefit them. Sympathy and respect for labour will be stirred up among people who have given little or no attention to the subject hitherto. In my opinion, and in the opinion of the driest and hardest writers upon the subject, such sympathy is necessary in order to raise these burdens, and is finally a sure means of effecting that end, after which legislation would toil in vain.

*LORD DE RAMSEY: My Lords, whatever may be thought within these walls as to the difference of opinion between the noble Earl (Dunraven), and the rest of the Members of the Committee, I think I may say that outside these walls there will be but one feeling of gratitude to the noble Earl and the other members of the Committee for their labour connected with this most difficult subject. And when your Lordships have been told that one member of that Committee has spent 300 hours in analysing details of evidence, I think from that fact the country will judge to what an extent the interest felt in this subject has been shared in this House and by the way in which it has been taken up by your Lordships. What, after all, does the difference between the noble Earl and the members of the Committee come to? It is essentially a difference of opinion as to how we can arrive at the best way to give effect to what we all desire. The noble Earl's proposed Report was very drastic in some of its remedies, while the members of the Committee look to what is practicable. My Lords, you will not expect from me to-night any attempt to say what can be done or what should be done. It is in a commercial country like this a matter of the very greatest importance when any matters concerning capital and labour come before us, that those matters should be treated most carefully; otherwise, we may do immense mischief. The Report refers chiefly to sanitation, and the Secretary of State has already in another place made a statement in answer to an hon. Member on that subject. Therefore, your Lordships will, I dare say, forgive me if this evening I do not go deeply into what may be considered necessary to be done. If this Government, or any other Government, should think well to take up the portion or portions of the Report regarding sanitation, I have no doubt such a course in that direction would meet with a certain amount of approval. But I think before going into the matter of sanitation or any other matter for the very few minutes that I intend to ask for your attention, it may be as well to remind your Lordships that we have every reason to be satisfied in this country with the result of the negotiations of the Berlin Conference, and it is satisfactory to find that this country, by its Factory Acts and its Workshops Acts, has taken the lead in the civilised world in the course I am referring to, and I think we should make a bad return to those who have assisted in that legislation, and to some of those who have gone, if we were, by any undue meddling with that which has turned out so well, to attempt to do anything which would destroy its effect. If we were to try to do anything impracticable in the shape of further limiting the hours of labour for women and young persons; if we were to endeavour by any means to limit the hours of labour for men, we might unconsciously perhaps, be driving trade away from our shores; and in these days, when the great mass of trade is centreing round the great towns, and in the great centres of population, we might, by one false step, do what a great strike appears to have done lately to the Port of London. Local Authorities may do a great deal more than they have done to carry out the wishes of the Committee in the matter of sanitation. We have now, both in rural and urban districts, medical officers, sanitary officers, and Inspectors, and we have also the Medical Officers of Health of the County Councils. It may be possible in the future to insist upon the machinery which is now in existence being applied to those places which that machinery has failed, at present, to reach, and I believe that if that course were adopted it might meet with the approval of Parliament better than by creating a new and large army of Factory and Workshop Inspectors, an army as to which, it would be quite open to question, whether its members are adapted for the work required to be done, or are qualified to be judges of what is proper sanitation. With regard to the question of foreign immigration, I do not wish to add a word to what has fallen from the very reverend Prelate who spoke just before me; and I will pass on to a matter which is not mentioned in the Report, though what I have to say affects it in reference to paragraph 193. Your Lordships will be glad to hear that no refusal has yet been made, when leave has been asked for, to enter private workshops. That is the Report of the Factory Inspectors, and therefore, if it should please Parliament to insist on further inspection there would be, judging from the past, no difficulty about that matter. But, my Lords, an Englishman's house is his castle; and I believe it will not be the wish of this Government, and I hope not of any other Government, to unnecessarily curtail that liberty which we, one and all of us, uphold. I notice that there is only one recommendation in the Report as to the limitation of machinery used—what machinery should be used or should not be used; and the Committee have recommended that women should not use an instrument called an "oliver" of above a certain weight. My Lords, the Report is very interesting, and I wish I could have said something more definite, but I must say this, that I do agree with the noble Earl (Lord Derby) when he says that we must look to the stoppage of early marriages and to better education; and our working classes must learn that heroic remedies cannot altogether better their lot. This Committee may be certain that the results of their labours will be read with great care by our artisans and operatives, and I am sure of this, that if by any extension of existing legislation Parliament can see its way to better their lot, they will not have to wait long if such legislation can be made practicable for their welfare.

*THE BISHOP OF RIPON: My Lords, I trust I may claim the indulgence which I think your Lordships' House is always ready to extend to one who ventures to address you for the first time. I may say at the outset that I feel very cordially in agreement with the noble Earl who deprecated anything like a declaration on our part which would give rise to false hopes or expectations out of doors. To raise false hopes is always a mistake, but I may venture to point out that, on the other hand, it is dangerous unwisdom for any Legislature to destroy the hopes and legitimate aspirations of the people. But to ignore a distress and to kill out hope is, if I am not mistaken, to beget at once the spirit of despair, which is the parent of violence. Having said that much I am sure you will allow me to give the impressions which have been passing through my own mind, not merely from going through the Report but from diving into the evidence by which it is accompanied. I thought it would not be quite right or honest for any Member of your Lordships' House to read the Report without supporting it in some degree by a study of the evidence; and the result of my survey and study of the evidence is a deep impression that there is certainly revealed by it a state of things which is one of distress and danger. The conclusion which I reached is that certainly something ought to be done. I am aware that when a person has committed himself to that utterance he is open to the cheap retort that that is a cheap and easy thing to say, and that it would be better to face the question, "What can be done?" But may I venture to lay down another aphorism, which, at any rate, I am myself old-fashioned enough to believe in, and that is that wherever it can be shown that something ought to be done there must be a way of doing something, at any rate, towards that end. And, my Lords, when I say that something ought to be done, I speak not only of distress but of danger. You have read the Report and the evidence. It gives a picture of misery. It is a picture of long hours and low wages, of wretched insanitary houses and short lives. It has been said by someone, with what degree of authority I do not know, that one-ninth of the people of London end their days in the workhouse. It is not merely a picture of misery, however, it is a picture of misery overshadowed by oppression. We have heard of the sweater, the fogger, and of the truckster; I have been searching in my mind for some ancient authority from whom I might derive a parallel to the sweater: and I recollect that transaction of ancient days in which a man took a mean advantage of the necessities of his brother man and bought a birthright for a mess of pottage. I think when that mess of pottage was sold so dearly that was a true description of the sweater. It was an ancient instance, and it gives a hint for the real definition of a sweater—he is the man who takes advantage of the necessities of his brother man. There have been such in all ages; and as we read of the greed of the sweater and the intensity of the misery of which he takes advantage, I see reproduced the picture which the Prophet drew of the men of his day who panted for the dust on the head of the poor—who sold the righteous for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes. My Lords, if that were the only picture, its misery would be bad enough, but in that picture we have two darker shadows—life prematurely cut short, and, what is worse, a life so spiritless, so hopeless, so apathetic, that it can scarcely be said to be life at all. Nothing struck me with so much force in this evidence as that portion of it which made it clear that the people you have to deal with is a people from whom all spirit seems to have departed. Their acquiescence in tyranny is absolutely mournful. To show how deep is that apathy, I would refer your Lordships to the evidence of the witnesses Mr. Hoffmann, and Mr. Arnold White. What is it you find there? You find an absolute spiritlessness, which was incapable of understanding what advantages could be legally claimed, an absolute acquiescence in tyrannies which men of spirit and energy would at once have resented. Imagine how spiritless they must have grown, when men and women accept less than the regulation wages; when they submit to work nine to 11 hours as a half-day's work; when they permit a portion of their wages to be withheld, the money so withheld being made the means of a new oppression, and of preventing them seeking to obtain higher wages elsewhere. This evidence, my Lords, presents pictures of deep distress; but beyond them lie threatenings of danger. It is not a picture of any small danger, or of dangers of a particular class; but of dangers which beset the community. I would call attention to the evidence as to the spreading of disease. I think the evidence given before the Committee is complete, that disease is spread through the instrumentality of those workshops. Insanitary conditions breed disease; clothing is infected by disease among the workers. One witness from Leeds gave evidence that, at any rate, one-third of the contagious diseases in that town were not reported. What, my Lords, does that mean, if not peril to the community? This danger in itself is one great reason for saying that something ought to be done. The spreading of disease in this way seems to be inevitable. It passes on its own subtle way. It may meet you in your own homes, however careful you may be. You may live where all the arrangements known to science give you entire security, but it pursues you: it comes in the clothes; it travels in your letters. The ancient picture of danger is revived. Escape cannot be calculated. It is as though a man fled from a lion and a bear met him, and when he went to his house and leaned upon the wall the serpent bit him. That is a danger, but it is not the only one. There are also the dangers which arise from impaired health, and from the enfeebled physical powers of a section of the population; and this is a consideration which a great nation ought surely to take into account. Those, my Lords, are the dangers and distresses. Something ought to be done, and something can be done. As I have looked at this matter I would not for one moment countenance heroic legislation, or speak a single word which would seem to convey that you can easily deal with these questions which are connected with economic laws or with the organic life of the people. But this is clear, that something can be done to remedy these great evils. Palliatives, not remedies, the noble Earl opposite called them, but I should be inclined to hope they would be found to be remedies. Let us look for one moment in considering what can be done, and see what has been done. Legislation of this character has taken place in the past. Legislation took place which was intended to put an end to the truck system. But the evidence has shown that that Act of Parliament is ignored, and that it is very easy to drive, as the common expression is, a coach and four through it. I think, my Lords, if it were a question of fishing, and some of the fish were escaping your net, I think you would be able to do something. You would make the meshes smaller. Is it not possible to do that in regard to these Acts of Parliament, and in that way to minimise some of the evils which exist? But it is not merely the question of breaches of the Truck Acts with which you have to deal. It is a question what other arrangements—what other precautions—can you take? Factory Inspectors have done much, but not enough, to mitigate the evils. The complaint which arises—and I think that the Report bears it out—that the Inspectors themselves are inadequate or unable to perform the task imposed upon them implies that they are not sufficiently numerous. It is in the power of the Legislature to deal with the matter, and it is also in the power of the Legislature to enforce inspection. Something has been said this evening about invading the sanctuary of a man's home. We know it has been said that an English man's house is his castle, and that you must not invade its sacred precincts. I am ready to admit it; but, my Lords, I put it to you that when a habitation ceases to be a home, when it becomes in practice a workshop, can anyone believe that it is entitled to that sanctity which belongs to a home? As long as it is a home, respect it; but the moment it becomes a den of tyranny, it is, I think, right to claim entrance there. Now, my Lords, the word "responsibility" has been used, and I am thankful that it has been used. It seems to me that in all legislation, speaking under the correction of those who know better than myself, one of the greatest difficulties has been the necessity of settling responsibility somewhere; but I am equally persuaded that we are losing our opportunities, and mistaking the problem before us here, if we hesitate to fasten the responsibility somewhere. You can discern where it ought to lie. If the owner and employer have interests in the matter you can, at any rate, determine that the employer and the owner, as the Primate has suggested, are, and can be, made jointly responsible. But I should prefer that one person, at any rate, should be held responsible, and that that person, in the case of workshops, should be the employer. In these ways surely legislation in the matter is possible. Again, another thing, my Lords, has come out of the Report. We know that knowledge is power, and we find from the Report that want of skill leaves a man at the mercy of his employer. Hence, if to improve knowledge is to increase power, the possession of skill is a protection against tyranny. Now, the remedy for this want of power in the unskilled lies surely in affording largely increased opportunities for what we call technical education. This touches the altered Code of which so much has been said. May I throw out at the close of my remarks two suggestions? There is, my Lords, an influence which lies beyond the question of legislation. I acknowledge as freely as anyone that you can never legislate in such a way as to make abuses impossible. The ingenuity of rapacity will be sure to find a way to evade your Statutes; and greed will drive its triumphant chariot through your Acts of Parliament. But discussions like this are rendering strength and power to that unwritten Code which is more potent than any Acts of Parliament. But what is that unwritten Code? It is found in the spirit of a people; its throne is the national conscience, and its power is that force which one of the Members of your Lordships' House has called the greatest force in the world—public opinion. To appeal to public opinion to raise it and to make its voice stronger upon this question should be your aim; and this, I say, is one remedy which is largely in your Lordships' hands. There is one thing which your Lordships may do yourselves in this: you may lend your aid to lead the fashion. Hurry and haste are the opportunity of the sweater. It is possible for us so to direct and influence public opinion as, at any rate, to induce those who are responsible for the haste with which work is done more careful to give their orders beforehand, and not to crowd their orders together upon those whom they employ; we can thus lessen the opportunities which evil men are only too ready to use. Then the other point upon which I would say my closing words is this: I venture to think that the problem lies largely in the production of an inferior class of goods. A noble Earl boasted the other day to an audience that, in addressing your Lordships' House, he wore a pair of co-operative trousers. If that meant a determination to use only the best goods, and to pay a fair price for them, it would be a good step in the desired direction, and would pave the way for others. The fashion might well be set, and the determination made to use only sound articles, and to pay a good and fair price for them. My Lords, that is the last suggestion I have to make. I appeal to your Lordships not to say that nothing can be done, for outside there are anxious ones waiting to know what will be said. Behind the reserved words of the Report there are hearts which are sad, and lives which are depressed with misery, appealing to you through such a Report as this, and imploring you to open the door of your compassion, and to take what practical steps you can to remedy these vast evils.

*THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN: My Lords, my noble Friend on the Cross Benches, with a kindly sympathy for me, invited me to go and take my seat beside him there; but I confess, when I heard my noble Friend Lord Monkswell declare his intention of attacking me at close quarters, I congratulated myself that I sit at some distance from him, and that there is a Rule which prevents a noble Lord crossing the House in front of the Lord Chancellor. My noble Friend Lord Monkswell's speech chiefly consisted of denials of, and certain assertions upon, the deductions from the evidence which I gave your Lordships yesterday. I am very pleased that, owing to the fact that the Debate was adjourned yesterday, noble Lords have had some opportunity of considering my remarks of last night, and of preparing themselves to answer them. I am only sorry the result has not been more successful. The noble Earl Lord Derby said yesterday, and said very truly, that, as I had travelled over considerable ground, he found it very difficult to answer the points I had raised. I am in precisely the same position in regard to my noble Friend Lord Monkswell. He has raised so many points in his speech that, as I have not had the advantage of studying it, I must ask your Lordships to excuse me if I do not answer every point which he has raised. As I said, my noble Friend's speech largely consisted of an assertion. He stated that in regard to what I said as to paragraph 65 I was all wrong, for he had examined the marginal references and he had found them all right. What I laid before your Lordships yesterday was my opinion with regard to that paragraph, and I supported it by references to the evidence of every one of the witnesses. I did not ask your Lordships to accept my simple assertion that the evidence of the witnesses mentioned in the margin did not bear out the contention of the Committee; but I supported the statements I made, and gave my reasons for making them, by reading the very words the witnesses used. There is one personal matter which I think I ought to touch upon. I do not think it is very generous or altogether just of my noble Friend opposite to accuse me of being the cause why your Lordships' Committee did not report last Session. He says it was owing to the course taken by me that for three or four weeks in June the Committee did not sit.

*LORD MONKSWELL: Six weeks after the end of May.

*THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN: As a matter of fact, the reason why the Committee did not sit for several weeks was that three or four important witnesses, Mr. Giffen, Mr. Shipton, Mr. Redgrave, Mr. Oram, and various witnesses of that class were not ready, and I was waiting for the evidence. There would have been no object in bringing the Committee together, and I was not responsible for the delay.

*LORD MONKSWELL: The noble Earl will allow me to say I am glad to hear that. I am only sorry that explanation was not given before.

*THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN: I was exceedingly anxious that the Report should be got out last Session. I greatly regretted that the Committee would not consider a Report in August last. They had four or five weeks remaining of the Session to do so. My noble Friend has said that he spent 300 hours in making an epitome of the evidence. To assist him in making that epitome he had my draft, which contains, with five or six exceptions, every reference to evidence that is given in the Report, and most of the deductions and conclusions from evidence. The draft must have been of some little assistance to him. Yet he consumed 300 hours, as he informs us, in preparing a summary. He must, therefore, appreciate the difficulty of drafting a Report. So anxious was I that the Report should be out before the end of the Session that I had it printed and circulated 10 days after the Committee ceased to take evidence. I mention that fact to show that I did my utmost to get the draft out in time, and that, so far as I was concerned, nothing that I could do was wanting. Now, there is another point to which I think I should refer. It was mentioned also by my noble Friend Lord Derby, I think, last night. That point is, that I must be wrong in supposing that the excessive competition of employers has resulted in a cutting-down of prices. According to the laws of political economy, the competition among employers ought naturally to have caused a rise in prices or in wages. But it has not done so; and if your Lordships will consider the peculiarities of the case, you will see why. This excessive competition among manufacturers has produced, as I explained to your Lordships last night, an excessive desire to obtain cheapness in production, even at the sacrifice of excellence. This led to the substitution of cheap, unskilled labour for dear skilled labour, and that fact has favoured and led to the employment of destitute foreign labour. If the labour market was limited, competition among employers would, of course, raise wages; but the market being unlimited, any amount of this cheap, foreign labour being obtainable from the constant stream of foreign immigration, the effect has been exactly the opposite. The effect has been to supplant well-paid and skilled native labour by very badly-paid unskilled foreign labour, and to drive a very considerable amount of British labour out of employment altogether. It has been said in reference to that part of the subject that this foreign labour is not destitute, and that it does not go on the rates. The noble Earl, Lord Derby, said last night that, as these foreign labourers did not fall upon the rates or live on charity, they were not to be considered paupers. It is perfectly true that they do not go on the rates to any great extent, but it is equally true that they force the native population on the rates. The Bishop of Bedford, and witness after witness, admitted that the foreigners themselves went upon the rates to a very slight extent, but they all asserted that they were the cause of pauperism in others, and did drive British labour, to a very great extent, upon the rates. As to their receiving charity, they are assisted to a very considerable extent by the Jewish Board of Guardians. Though the rule of the Jewish Board of Guardians is not to give them assistance or relief until they have resided six months in this country, they do give them assistance when they are in real want—that is to say, in a state of semi-starvation, and they assist them also out of the country. Then there are the Leman Street refuge, the minor synagogues, and other Jewish Bodies to which Mr. Stephany admitted they applied for assistance, and various other institutions. As to their not being paupers, the whole body of the evidence was to the effect that they were paupers, if by paupers you mean persons in a destitute condition and unable to support themselves. Even Mr. Stephany, the Secretary of the Jewish Board of Guardians, admitted that the bulk of these foreign immigrants would be unable to take care of themselves without becoming a public charge on landing in this country unless they were assisted by various charitable institutions. My Lords, I do not think there is anything else of very great importance that it is necessary for me to comment upon. I have been rather twitted for not making any distinct recommendation in regard to the matter of foreign immigration. I explained to your Lordships last night why I did not do so. It was because the House of Commons was inquiring into the subject. The Committee of the House of Commons reported, and reported rather strongly, shortly after my draft was circulated; and if the recommendations in that Report of the Committee of the House of Commons were thoroughly carried out, I, for one, should be fairly satisfied for a time. But I should not like your Lordships to think I shrink from the logical conclusions of what I have said. I said last night that as long as your labour market here is liable to be flooded with cheaper unskilled foreign labour I greatly doubted whether it was in the power of the workers themselves, by self-help and mutual help, to obtain for themselves better wages, or to do anything which will materially and permanently benefit their position; and I should, as far as I am concerned, speaking for myself, be very glad, therefore, if this country did what every other country in the world has done—that is, adopt measures to protect itself from alien pauper immigration. My noble Friend, Lord Derby, said there was danger of retaliation if this is done. Well, my Lords, as I was born in Ireland, perhaps I may be permitted to say they retaliated long ago. No country would take this description of British labour. Try to send them anywhere else, and see what will be the result. Try and send them to America, and you will find they will send them back in the same steamer. And it is the same in any other country—they will not receive them. We are the only people who will accept, without restriction, crowds of destitute aliens. With our own labour market full and brimming over, as everybody admits, it is a cruel folly and a great cause of distress to allow the labour market to be still further congested. We are the only nation on earth who will allow it. If any noble Lord can explain how it is possible to relieve an overfull reservoir which is in danger of bursting by letting water out if at the same time you let in an equal or a greater stream, I shall be pleased to hear that explanation. I should like to know how the problem can be solved. That, my Lords, is, I think, all that I have to touch upon. I do not think it would be in the least useful to your Lordships, or serve any useful purpose whatever, if I were to go into the personal questions which have been raised by Lord Thring, and if the noble Lord will excuse me I will not make any reply to the observations he has made than to say that I disagree entirely with them all. There are three points, my Lords, which I omitted yesterday which I should like to mention. One is that in speaking of the omissions in the Factory Acts I forgot to mention that all, or the greater part, of the work places at Cradley Heath and in the neighbourhood are entirely exempt from the operation of the Act. They are not attached to premises; the people who work in them hire their stalls and become occupiers. They are not employed, and the Factory Legislation does not apply to them at all. That is a matter which ought to be attended to. Another matter is in reference to the Government contracts. I would remind my noble Friend on the Cross Benches that in my draft I made no recommendation whatever as to settling the rate of wages in Government contracts. All I recommended was that steps should be taken to see that there should be no sub-contracting. I think that the system of the Government appointing as viewers to inspect the work done by contractors for the nation, men who have been, or who were at the time of their appointment, employed by the contractors, by the very men who make the contracts, is utterly contrary to all ideas of business. As to sub-contracting, I think some action should be taken in the matter. At present all we have to rely upon is the good will and desire to do right of the Director of Contracts. We are all perfectly satisfied, no doubt, that he will do all that is necessary or right in the matter, as far as he is concerned; but it is impossible to tell what may happen in the future. I think it is most desirable that by some Order in Council, or by some means of that kind, a rule should be laid down that in the case of Government contracts those contracts should be executed by the firms which take them out. At the present, as we were told by witnesses in evidence, even if the Factory clause is inserted in the contracts it is nobody's business to see that they are carried out; and that also ought to be remedied. Then there is another matter. I am glad that the Report contains a valuable suggestion in the direction of the centralisation of those authorities which have to do with all these labour questions. I went further in my draft and recommended that there should be a separate Department constituted to deal with all these matters. I think that is necessary. I think the work is so divided now that it cannot possibly be well done. You have the Foreign Office collecting statistics about labour in foreign countries, the Colonial Office doing the same thing for the Colonies, and I think three or four other Departments all concerned in matters which are closely connected with the interests and legal rights of labour. I believe that a separate Department would be efficacious in this matter; but whether that is so or not, I am glad that the Committee have recommended centralisation, and I hope Her Majesty's Government will consider how far that can be carried out. My Lords, that is all I propose to say. If I were to attempt to answer the speeches which have been made by the noble Lords on the other side of the House, probably my best way of doing so would be to send for a file of the *Times*, and read the report given there of the speech which I made last night. In the matters which I then laid before the House I proved my statements by ample references to the evidence, and I submit to your Lordships that I made out my case, and that no reply whatever has been made to it.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: Does the noble Earl wish to press his Amendment?

EARL WEMYSS: I do not wish to press my Amendment.

Amendment and Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

HERRING FISHERY (SCOTLAND) ACT (1889) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 75.)

House in Committee (on re-commitment) (according to order); Bill reported without further amendment, and to be read 3ª on Thursday next.

TRUSTEES APPOINTMENT BILL.

(No. 84.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

LORD HERSCHELL: My Lords, I need detain your Lordships but for a minute in moving the Second Reading of this Bill. An Act was passed a good many years ago, now known as Powell's Act, to facilitate the appointment of new Trustees in the case of religious congregations and societies, for vesting the property in the newly-appointed Trustees without the necessity of incurring the expense and trouble of a conveyance. That Act has been found to be defective in cases which really came fully within its scope, and it has been held not to apply to the Trustees of chapels, belonging, among others, to the Wesleyan connection, because they are not merely Trustees of the individual chapel, but they are persons holding an official position in connection with the Wesleyan connection, having charge of one or more than one place of worship, and Trustees of them all. There are several minor provisions in the Bill, but they are all within the general scope of facilitating the appointment of Trustees in such cases. I anticipate no objection on the part of your Lordships to the Second Reading, and I propose that the Bill be referred to the Committee on Law.

Bill read 2ª (according to order), and committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

KEW AND PETERSHAM VICARAGE BILL.—(No. 77.)

Read 2ª (according to order), and committed to the Standing Committee for General Bills.

AUSTRALASIAN COLONIES.

Address for—

"Return showing the date at which responsible government was proclaimed in each Australian Colony; the estimated population of each colony at the time of the concession of responsible government; together with, if possible, the area of each colony, distinguishing the area already alienated at the time of the concession, and the area remaining unalienated and assigned to the control of the colony."—(*The Earl Beauchamp.*)

COMPANIES (MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION) BILL.—(No. 67.)

Reported from the Standing Committee for General Bills, with Amendments: The Report thereof received; and Bill re-committed to a Committee of the Whole House; and to be printed as amended. (No. 110.)

House adjourned at five minutes before Eight o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 10th June, 1890.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

BELFAST CORPORATION BILL [LORDS] (*by Order.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

(3.5.) MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I rise for the purpose of moving that the Bill be read a second time upon this day six months. I do so at the request of my constituents and other inhabitants of Belfast. My own constituents number, probably, one-third —certainly one-fourth—of the population, and as they have no representation whatever—not a single voice or vote in the Municipal Council of Belfast—I think it will be conceded by the House that any representation I make on their behalf is entitled to consideration. Belfast was divided 50 years ago into five wards, when the town only numbered 60,000 inhabitants, and it is still divided into the same wards, although the population is now about 250,000. Those wards are so distributed that one-third of the population associated with me in politics have no representation on the Council, and they will continue to be unrepresented on the Council until there is a fresh partition of the municipal area. That being the case, my constituents have asked me to request the House to reject this Bill unless provisions are included which will carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission made 10 years ago, namely, that the wards of the borough shall be re-distributed and their numbers greatly increased. I am sensible, however, that it would be an inconvenient and unusual course to press the House in the middle of a busy Session to include within the limits of such a Bill as this a plan involving much labour and great delay. I am, therefore, disposed to waive that claim for the present, although I consider it ripe, and I am the more disposed to waive it because we are promised a Local Government Bill for Ireland, which will include local government of the Irish cities and boroughs, and then Belfast will be effectually dealt with. I am, therefore, disposed to modify the demands of my constituents so far as not to press upon the House the question of a fresh partition of the municipal area; but I think I shall be able to prove in a few words that it is necessary in the public interests of Belfast that the House should assent to the Reference of the Bill to a Hybrid Committee and to the Instruction which I propose to move. If the Reference and Instruction are accepted, I do not propose to divide the House; but if they are refused, I shall be obliged to challenge most strenuously the principle of the Bill; and if it passes this stage, I shall be obliged to oppose it on its future stages. The promoters attach great importance to the fact that the terms of the Bill have been approved by a majority of the ratepayers, but the main financial considerations have never been submitted to them. The only question submitted to the ratepayers was whether the Corporation should acquire a site for a new city hall, but there is a question beyond the acquirement of the site, and that is the consideration of the terms and conditions of the bargain and further financial questions, involving nearly £200,000—that is, if the site should be used, as I contend it should be, for a public park, of which that great manufacturing town is so seriously in need, and not for the erection of a costly city hall, when there is an excellent one, only built 20 years ago, already in existence. Although the acquirement of the site has been approved, the intention of the Corporation to build a City Hall at a cost of £170,000 is so much disapproved of that 4,000 inhabitants of Belfast opposed the terms of the Bill. It is in the name of those persons that I ask the House to adopt ordinary measures of inquiry. The circumstances of the case are extremely peculiar. In 1782 a public meeting was held in Belfast of linen traders and other inhabitants, for the purpose of founding a public market hall for the sale of white linen. A public subscription was set on foot, and application was made for a site on which to erect this hall. In 1783, 107 years ago, Arthur, Marquess of Donegall, by an indenture granted a piece of meadow ground in the town of Belfast, to be held for ever, at an annual rent of £4 10s., upon trust to be used for ever as a public market for the sale of linen. Upon that site the Linen Hall was built. Twenty years after, in 1803, George Augustus, the succeeding Marquess of Donegall, gave a second piece of ground, adjoining the first, for the use of the inhabitants of Belfast, at an annual rent for ever of 1s. It actually has been used from that day to this as a public walk, and yet this is a part of the property which the Corporation of Belfast are about to purchase from a body of private persons. The Trust has continued to be ad-administered, but under circumstances which to me seem to demand strict inquiry, because here is a Public Trust which has for some time been alienated from the public use and turned to private account. The building has been used for many years for private offices and warehouses, and the Trustees have alienated their Trust. I submit, therefore, that the circumstances under which that Public Trust was alienated must be examined by a Committee of the House. The late Marquess of Donegall, the owner of the estate, died seven years ago, and the Countess of Shaftesbury passed into possession as the new tenant for life. Two years ago the Countess of Shaftesbury and her son, a minor, instituted an action in the Irish Chancery Division claiming that the public grants of a century ago were void by reason of some flaw, that the deeds should be cancelled and possession of the land given up, and that the Trustees should pay to the Countess rents and profits for the period since the death of the late Marquess. That action is still pending. In it the Countess and her son are plaintiffs, and the Trustees of this Public Trust, long since alienated for public use, are the defendants. The Bill recites that the action is still pending, that it involves questions of doubt and difficulty, the decision whereof will involve considerable delay and expense. But doubt, difficulty, delay, and expense to whom? The Corporation are not a party to the action—the Countess and her son are the plaintiffs and the Trustees are the defendants.

Surely there are hon. Members who will agree with me that it would be best for the Corporation to waive this question of the erection of the hall until the rights of the parties have been determined by the suit at issue. The Corporation, however, purpose out of their munificence—it would be more admirable if it were their own money—to treat both the parties to the action as if they were upon the impossible footing of both parties having won the action; they propose to pay the legal costs of the Countess of Shaftesbury, and also the legal costs of the Trustees of the Linen Hall, the defendants. They propose to pay the counter rents and profits since the death of the late Marquess; and, on the other hand, they turn round and propose to pay the Trustees in hard cash the sum of £19,000. What does the Bill say about the legal rights of the Trustees? It says the White Linen Hall has for many years past ceased to be used as a public market, and has been used for private warehouses and for the accommodation of the Belfast Society for the Promotion of Knowledge. It occurs to me, that if the original use has ceased to exist, the Trust ought to have been transferred to some other analogous use in the public interest generally without any charge being made. In the Bill, too, whilst it is proposed to pay £19,000 to certain persons called proprietors and occupiers, it gives no particulars whatever as to the nature of that interest, or as to the basis of compensation. I claim, before the Bill is advanced another stage, that we are entitled to receive a categorical description of the names of persons. The whole of the proprietors are to receive £6,500 between them. They are said to be representatives of the original subscribers, but the original subscribers are all dead two generations ago. Not only the masters, but the servants are to be compensated, even the Belfast Society for the Promotion of Knowledge. This Subscription Society asks to be compensated, because for many years it has received a benefit. A more peculiar inversion of any ordinary rational doctrine of compensation has never come under my notice. The occupiers are to get £13,000. Who are the occupiers? This place was never intended to accommodate them. Have these tenants paid any rent? There is nothing about it in the Bill. I demand to know, before this matter goes further, what rent has been paid, to whom, and to what use it has been applied. I also wish to know whether, if the rent has been paid, it has been invested in order to make provision in the event of compensation having to be paid. There is one provision of the Bill which I would commend to the attention of the Attorney General for Ireland. The Bill provides that the interests of the proprietors of the Linen Hall shall be compensated; but it is admitted that their interests, if any, cannot be proved. Among those to be compensated are the Belfast Society for the Promotion of Knowledge, tenants who have derived advantage from the alienation of these Trusts, and even sub-tenants who have received advantage under them. A more grotesque and fantastic proposal in reference to Trusts Funds was never submitted to this House. The total sum to be paid for the site is £30,000, and I hope the Chairman of Committees will take into consideration that not only the late Mayor, Sir J. Haslam, but the present Mayor, who is promoting the Bill, are on the Committee of the Linen Hall. In fact, there is to be a payment by the Mayor as head of the Corporation to the Mayor as one of the occupiers of the Linen Hall. Under such circumstances, I respectfully submit that the Corporation and the Mayor himself ought to be most anxious to secure a full inquiry. The Bill goes on to say that the terms offered to the Countess of Shaftesbury are very generous and ought to be accepted. Possibly it may be so; but, if they are generous, I think the Mayor and Corporation ought to be willing and glad to have the fact proved. So far as the expense of an inquiry is concerned, any objection on the ground of expense would come with a bad grace from the Corporation of Belfast. Nevertheless, I am prepared to undertake, if a Committee is granted, that the expense shall be very slight. We on our side propose to engage no counsel, and it would only be necessary to examine three witnesses, one for the Corporation, one for the proprietors, and one for the ratepayers. I would further undertake that at the end of a couple of sittings the Committee should be in a position to report. In the next place, I wish to point out to the House that the question of the cost of erecting a City Hall has never been submitted to the ratepayers. My own constituents are shut out from representation, and have no voice in the Municipal Council, and it is idle to tell me that the period of three years which is to intervene between the passing of the Bill and the erection of the hall will be any protection to their interests. It is said that the present City Hall is inadequate. I have had occasion to visit it more than once. It is conveniently situated, and there is no pretence for saying that the new site is more convenient or more central. Both sites are close together, in the heart of the city, and one is just as convenient as the other. It must not be forgotten that Belfast is now engaged in spending £300,000 of the ratepayers' money on main drainage and other sanitary works, and that one-third of the ratepayers of the city are shut out from representation. I think they have a right to say, as they do say, that this new scheme shall be deferred until the main drainage plan shall have been completed. Three years ago I introduced a Bill for extending the franchise in Belfast. The Corporation resisted me strenuously, but in the end they gave way. They are now making a boast of what was then done against their will. I trust that the House will accept the proposal I now make.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day three months."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*(3.30.) SIR E. HARLAND (Belfast, N.): I am sure that the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) does not seriously mean to jeopardise the passing of this Bill. I have no doubt that he is as proud of being one of the Representatives of that city as I am myself, and I doubt if it is possible to find another town, except, perhaps, Middlesborough, which has made such gigantic strides in prosperity as the City of Belfast. In 1831 the population only amounted to 41,000; in 1861 it was 120,000, and in 1891, when the next census is taken, I believe it will be found to have increased to 250,000 or 260,000. That fact speaks

well for the continuous development of the city in the past, and the great progress it has made. The hon. Member has referred to the history of this Trust, the complicated conditions which have been attached to it, and the manner in which it has become disassociated from its original purposes. It only affords another illustration of the manner in which property, when it becomes disassociated from its original purpose, gradually falls into the hands of others, not from any dishonest process or want of care, but from the way in which a great deal of the land in Ireland has gradually fallen away from its original possessors into the hands of the tenants, whose claims at this day are being constantly equitably decided upon. With regard to the value of this ground it is said that it might have been obtained tor £20,000.

MR. SEXTON: £26,000.

*SIR E. HARLAND: Well, £26,000. It is quite possible that at one time the property might have been obtained for such a sum, but that time has been allowed to pass and the value has been greatly increased. From my knowledge of the City of Belfast I may say that I should be very glad indeed, as an individual, to become possessed of this estate for £50,000, and I look upon the price which it is proposed to pay, namely, £30,000, as very low indeed. I can only compliment the Corporation of Belfast upon having acquired so perfect a site for the erection of public buildings at so small a cost. It is quite true that a Town Hall and Municipal Buildings are already in existence, but they have become quite inadequate for the purposes for which they are intended. The existing building only cost £16,000, and it may be readily imagined that such a structure is not adequate for the wants of a city like Belfast. If the House will compare the cost proposed to be incurred here with the expenditure in other large towns it will be admitted at once that the proposal of the Corporation is most reasonable. Bradford, with a population of 150,000, has expended £85,000 on a Town Hall; Leeds which, like Belfast, has a population of 250,000, has expended £130,000; Glasgow, with a population of 507,000, has spent £520,000; and Manchester, with a population of 500,000, has spent £832,000. The figures range from 10s. to 30s. per head of the population, but in the present case the cost will only amount to something like 15s. a head. It will, therefore, be seen that the sum we ask for is extremely moderate. If the hon. Member complains that his friends have not obtained that representation which he would like them to possess, I can only say that they are themselves to blame. They have full opportunity, by enterprise, perseverance, and energy, of obtaining representation. The election to seats on the Council rests entirely with the constituency, and hitherto, without paying the slightest respect to any particular section of the community, the cleverest and most able men have been elected. Comparisons are not always agreeable, but I may point out that the population of Belfast and Dublin are at the present moment about the same, and while only 8,315 ratepayers are enabled to vote in the municipal elections in Dublin there are 30,480 who are entitled to vote in Belfast.

MR. SEXTON: Will the hon. Baronet allow me to say that that is the result of a reform which I carried three years ago against the Corporation.

*SIR E. HARLAND: These figures are an illustration, and certainly there can be no objection made that the franchise in Belfast is so limited that the hon. Member's friends have not adequate means of being represented. I feel that the objections raised to this Bill are extremely weak, and that few of them are worth any consideration whatever. Reference has been made to the White Linen Hall having gradually become disused, but we all know how trade changes. Once there was a trade in Belfast connected with the manufacture of cotton. It has completely disappeared, and has been replaced by linen. When the latter trade was being developed it was a very great boon to the linen merchants to have a common market for their trade, but with the use of the telegraph and the development of business, it was found that the trade could be more readily carried on in the establishments of the merchants than in the market, which consequently became disused. The same thing has happened in Belfast with regard to the brown linen market, land for which was originally given by the Marquess of Donegall, and in which one piece of linen is offered for sale once a year, in order that the rights of the brown linen merchants may be maintained to the possession of the land. None of us, I think, will attempt to bolster up for a moment such a procedure as that, and it would be but fair and graceful to return the land to the representatives of the original owners. The piece of ground referred to in the Bill is most beautifully situated in the centre of the city, and I have no doubt that the Corporation will take very good care that sufficient space is reserved for the recreation of the public and for the general purposes which are now considered necessary in the centre of the city. But I hold that there is no necessity for the whole of the piece of land which is to be acquired to be thrown completely open. No city in the Kingdom less requires parks and open spaces than Belfast, because there is no other town where there is so large an area occupied according to population, and this arises from the fact that nearly every workman in Belfast occupies his own house. I do not think that any city is so perfect in its sanitary arrangements as Belfast, and in the miles of wide streets it possesses, the air from the mountains is enabled to come through the streets. I feel very great confidence indeed in asking the House not to put the Corporation of Belfast to the expense of from £1,800 to £2,000 in order to satisfy the wishes of the hon. Member opposite.

(3.45.) MR. M. HEALY (Cork): The hon. Member for North Belfast (Sir E. Harland) has, from beginning to end of his speech, carefully avoided any reference to the various points which have been dealt with by my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast. He has told us that Belfast is a very prosperous place, and that its prosperity is without a parallel. That may be so, but it has nothing to do with the questions we are discussing in connection with this Bill. The hon. Member has dwelt upon the necessity that exists for providing a Town Hall, and he made various comparisons between the condition of Belfast and of other cities. For my part, I think it would be well for one of the supporters of the Bill to address himself frankly and fairly to the important questions which have been raised by my hon. Friend, and offer some reason why the course he suggests should not be adopted. My hon. Friend has displayed great moderation in his opposition to the Bill. He has told us that his desire is not to reject the Bill. All he asks is that before it is passed into law, its provisions shall receive full and fair inquiry at the hands of this House. Now, what are the facts? Let me call attention to the provisions of the Bill. A more extraordinary measure was never introduced. The Corporation of Belfast propose to acquire a valuable piece of property in the City of Belfast. What is the usual course taken when the promoters of a private Bill seek to acquire power of that kind? Before they bring in their Bill they ascertain who are the persons interested in the property—the owners, lessees, and occupiers—and they then deposit in the office of this House a schedule setting forth that information. When that is done, and when the Bill is passed, an arbitrator is appointed under the Lands Clauses Act, by whom all claims and rights are considered, and a decision arrived at as to the amount of compensation which shall be awarded to each. This Bill, however, enacts that after the Bill shall have been passed, without ascertaining who the owners, occupiers, or lessees are, it shall be referred to an unskilled arbitrator, who shall decide, without question and without appeal, who the persons interested in the property are. The Bill goes on to say that the arbitrator shall exercise these extraordinary powers, not having regard to ordinary legal principles, or in accordance with the legal rights of the parties, but on such terms and in such manner as he shall think most fair. Now, I venture to submit that a more extraordinary proposal was never made in any measure submitted to a legislative assembly. As it is an unopposed Bill, it would not, of course, go before an ordinary Committee of this House, but it will be decided without the hearing of counsel or having the interests of the parties discussed, or any opportunity being afforded of inquiring what the legal rights of the parties are, and, indeed, without the taking of any evidence at all. My hon. Friend does not propose that the Bill should be rejected, but simply that so exceptional a Bill shall be dealt with in an exceptional manner—that it should not follow the ordinary course of going before an unopposed Committee, but that it shall be referred to a Special Committee, specially appointed by the House, consisting of nine members, which Committee shall be empowered to take evidence and to hear counsel. I think that a fairer or more reasonable proposal could not be made, and I am sure that the promoters of the measure will gain nothing by ignoring it, and seeking to get the Bill passed by a side wind. It is a case of Trust property, which, by some unexplained means, has passed out of the hands of the Trustees into those of private persons, who have used it not for public purposes, but for their own private gain. I think that this fact alone demands that a searching inquiry should be made. The hon. Member for North Belfast says that it is a matter of every day experience to find that property has been transferred in some extraordinary way from public to private purposes. My hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast has pointed out that a portion of this property belongs to the people of Belfast, and is used by them daily as a pleasure ground. Yet the proposal in the Bill is that the people of Belfast shall buy from the Trustees this land, which is already their own property. I cordially support the Motion which my hon. Friend has made.

Sir J. CORRY (Armagh, Mid), who was very indistinctly heard, was understood to say: The hon. Member for West Belfast says that a large portion of the people of Belfast have no representation in the Town Council. Many hon. Members will recollect that a few years ago there was considerable discussion in this House in reference to the propriety of increasing the representation of the inhabitants of Belfast, and the result was that the number of electors was increased from 6,000 to 30,000.

Mr. SEXTON: I must remind the hon. Baronet that the proposal which was made three years ago was strenuously resisted by the Corporation of Belfast.

Sir J. CORRY: The hon. Member has told the House that the ratepayers have had no knowledge of the proposals of the Corporation. All I can say is, that the provisions of the Bill were published in the local papers, and that a *plébiscite* was taken as to whether this land should be acquired or not. I think the Corporation are to be congratulated upon the successful efforts they have made to secure this property for public purposes. As to the value of it there can be no doubt at all. It is well worth £50,000, or double the amount which the Corporation propose to pay for it. Fifteen thousand of the ratepayers voted in favour of the Bill, and only 4,000 who voted against it were absolutely opposed to it. A considerable number voted because they thought that some inquiry should be made in reference to the matter. If the friends of the hon. Member for West Belfast are so strongly opposed to the measure, why have they not taken steps to show their opposition in the usual way? They have not done so, and I would earnestly appeal to the House to pass the Second Reading.

*(4.0.) MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): I understood the hon. Member for West Belfast to intimate that, although he moved that the Bill be read a second time upon this day six months, he does not intend to press that proposal, if he can only secure the two alternatives which he has placed upon the Paper—one that the Bill be referred to a Hybrid Committee, and the other an Instruction to the Committee to make provision in the Bill to secure that any resolution of the Municipal Council of Belfast to use the Linen Hall estate otherwise than as an open space shall not be valid unless it be confirmed, upon a poll, by a majority of the persons qualified to vote for members of the Municipal Council. With respect to the first question, that of referring the Bill to a Hybrid Committee, the hon. Member rests his case on the statement that the acquisition of this White Linen Hall, and the ground on which it stands, will cost the city more than the real value of the estate. It is proposed to give £30,000, and some one is reported to have said it would have been got for £26,000; but two hon. Members have stated that they would be glad to give £50,000, if they could get it for that sum. However, it is not necessary to enter into the question of the adequacy or inadequacy of the price. It is, at all events, clear that the question of acquiring the estate for the purpose of erecting a Town Hall has been carried by a vote of 15,000 ratepayers against 4,000. Therefore, the Corporation have, I think, a *primâ facie* case, which ought not to be re-opened in this House. But it is urged that a question of title may be raised, and of the interests of those who are concerned in this hall. If so, it could have been considered on Petition in a regular manner. The friends of the hon. Member for West Belfast have not thought it desirable to oppose the Bill in the usual way, and as they have not done so I confess that I do not think the House would be justified in going out of its way in order to refer the Bill to a Hybrid Committee. It is proposed by the Bill to raise a sum of £200,000, and out of that sum £170,000 is to be appropriated to the erection of a Town Hall. Now, it is quite true that the question of providing a Town Hall was submitted to the popular vote; but no question was submitted as to the cost of that Town Hall. That matter has not, as yet, been submitted to the municipal electors, and it affords some justification for the contention that there is still a question which ought to be submitted to a popular vote. The reply of the promoters is that they have inserted in the Bill provisions that no action shall be taken in respect to the erection of a Town Hall until after three several municipal elections shall have taken place, and as one third of the Town Council are elected every year, before the question becomes finally settled the whole of the Town Council will have been re-elected. That looks on the face of it a very good answer, but I am bound to say that, in my judgment, it is not a perfectly good answer. The reply to it is that Belfast is divided into wards so unequal in size and population that the election of Town Councillors through them does not seem an accurate reflection of the opinions of the electors. This is certainly possible, and it does not appear to be denied that the existing division in wards was authoritatively condemned some years since. I think that a case has been made out for the adoption of a mandatory Instruction, requiring before the sum of £170,000 shall be expended in erecting a Town Hall, that question shall be put before the electors by means of a *plébiscite*. What I would recommend is, that the proposal for the rejection of the Bill

should be withdrawn. There is no strong reason why it should be referred to a Hybrid Committee, but I think that the House might not unreasonably entertain the Instruction proposed by the hon. Member for West Belfast, and require the opinion of the electors of Belfast to be taken before the erection is proceeded with, so that the whole decision should not rest upon the view alone of the Town Council.

(4.7.) MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): One of the points raised by my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast is whether in this case there has not been a bargain made by private individuals for the sale of property which ought to belong to the public; and whether the whole of the proceedings have not been conducted in a questionable manner. I understand that one of the strongest objections urged by my hon. Friend is that the citizens of Belfast are asked to purchase for the site of a Town Hall, property which has been held in trust for public purposes, and which, in a manner which has not been explained, has passed into the hands of private individuals. Such a matter is one in regard to which the House of Commons ought to be exceedingly jealous. It is perfectly conceivable that a ring of persons interested in the possession of Trust property for their private advantage may have an interest in selling it for a large sum of money to the citizens of Belfast, in order that they may divest themselves of the position they now occupy as owners of the White Linen Hall, and be able to divide the proceeds. The Chairman of Committees has, I think, given the go-by to that point, but, so far as this House is concerned, I think it is one of the strongest points in the speech of my hon. Friend. I do not profess to understand all the details of the question, and I will, therefore, only refer to the statement of the hon. Baronet (Sir E. Harland), who knows so much about Belfast, that private individuals would be glad to give £50,000 for this property. The Corporation of Belfast are going to give £30,000, and, therefore, I think I am entitled to take the statement of the hon. Baronet with a grain of salt. If the Corporation are so anxious to have the property why did they not buy it long ago? I have yet to learn that the owners of property in Belfast are so patriotic and public-spirited that they are prepared to part with an estate worth £50,000 for £30,000. I do not believe one word of it. On the contrary, I believe that one of the chief promoters of the Bill is a gentleman who is himself personally and privately interested in the White Linen Hall, and who, when it is sold, will obtain a considerable share of the purchase money. I entirely support the proposal of my hon. Friend, and I have certainly heard nothing from the promoters of the Bill which should induce me to vote for it.

(4.13.) MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): I wish to say in answer to the objection raised by the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), and previously referred to by the hon. Member for West Belfast, that this Linen Hall was founded by a Public Trust, that that is an entirely erroneous view of the original foundation of the estate. It was founded for the purpose of advancing the Donegal Estate, and it owed its origin to a rivalry which existed between the towns of Newry and Belfast. In no sense can it be regarded as a public Trust, and everybody who knows anything about the town of Belfast and its constituency must know that that portion of it which the hon. Member for West Belfast represents in his opposition to the Bill contains the most ignorant and illiterate of its inhabitants. I am surprised, however, that the hon. Member should know so little of the Bill which he denounces. If he had taken the trouble to go to the office of the Clerk of the Peace, or to consult the Schedule lodged at the Private Bill Office, he would have found the amounts inserted which are to be given to each proprietor in the shape of compensation.

MR. SEXTON: The Bill itself says that many of them are not known.

MR. MACARTNEY: I think that the hon. Gentleman is unintentionally misleading the House. No compensation is to be given to any person unknown, but the names of those who are to receive compensation are stated. I cannot understand why, if there is so much objection to the Bill, it was not opposed in the ordinary way.

MR. SEXTON: The Bill itself proposes to set aside £6,000 for compensation, and it states that the representatives of the original proprietors are not known.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Does the Bill propose to give those persons compensation?

Mr. SEXTON: Yes, certainly.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Perhaps the hon. Member will point out how the Bill proposes to give compensation to persons who are not known.

Mr. SEXTON: That is what I want to know.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The hon. Member asks that the Bill should be sent to a Hybrid Committee. Why should it go to a Hybrid Committee? The hon. Member's constituents had an ample opportunity of petitioning against it. They do not pay one-eighth of the taxation of the City of Belfast. The proposals contained in the measure have already been submitted to a *plébiscite*, and carried by a large majority. Moreover, the hon. Member says that if it is referred to a Committee he does not consider it of sufficient importance to warrant the employment of counsel. The hon. Member for Cork (Mr. M. Healy) complains that the ordinary course has not been taken in the Bill of referring to arbitration, under the Land Clauses Act, the claims of the proprietors, occupiers, and other persons interested in this scheme.

*Mr. M. HEALY: What I said was that in ordinary cases when a Bill of this kind is introduced there is a schedule lodged with the Clerk of the House of the persons interested, and that this schedule is conclusive; but that in the case of this Bill the arbitrator has to find out who the parties interested are.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I am informed that that has been done.

*Mr. M. HEALY: Oh, no.

Mr. MACARTNEY: At all events, no ratepayer or proprietor or anybody connected with the scheme has made the same complaint as the hon. Member, who has no interest in Belfast and comes from the South of Ireland. I venture to assert that in regard to a private Bill of this nature the House has rarely listened to arguments of a more fallacious character for its rejection, or arguments supported by such a small amount of evidence.

(4.20.) Mr. T. HARRINGTON: (Dublin, Harbour): I must protest against the insolent observations of the hon. Member for South Antrim (Mr. Macartney) in regard to the illiteracy and want of intelligence of the constituency represented by my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast. If the hon. Member and his friends are presumed to monopolise the intelligence of Belfast, I am afraid that the people of this country will be induced to arrive at a very erroneous estimate of its extent. It would seem that the hon. Member has not read the Bill at all, and that he is wholly ignorant of the subject on which he has claimed the right of addressing the House. I think it has been made perfectly clear by my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast that a course has been taken in regard to this Bill which is most unusual in this House. Before bringing in the Bill it was the duty of the promoters to have ascertained carefully who were the persons interested in the property, and not to have inserted the names of some of them with a fishing commission to some arbitrator to find out the rest. That is, to say the least of it, a very unusual course, and a course which has never been taken in reference to a private Bill introduced into this House. I certainly think that the House will be departing from its usual course if it lends its countenance to the proposal which is made on the other side. The proposition of the hon. Member for West Belfast is a fair and reasonable one, and I shall be very much surprised if the House refuses to adopt it.

(4.23.) Mr. RENTOUL (Down, E.): It is only right to say that at the last election, out of the electors of Belfast who supported Unionist candidates, and who numbered about 18,000, there were only 560 illiterate voters; whereas in the Division of West Belfast, with a constituency of 7,000, the number of illiterate voters was 999. Belfast is a city which is singularly prosperous, and its prosperity has been made, to a large extent, by the two hon. Baronets who have to-day addressed the House. I am afraid that I cannot point to a single constituent of the hon. Member for West Belfast who has done anything whatever to make the city prosperous, or to enable it to take the place which it at present occupies. I think, therefore, that some consideration should be paid to the views of those hon. Baronets, rather than to an hon. Member whose constituents have contributed nothing whatever to the prosperity of the city.

(4.25.) MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I think that the constituents of the hon. Member for West Belfast who are now objecting to the Bill ought to have opposed it in the usual way. They had a *locus standi* to go before a Committee, where they would have been able to state their objections. It is not those who are promoting the Bill who are taking an unusual course, but those who might have opposed it, but who neglected the opportunity. Admittedly the constituents of the hon. Member for West Belfast represent only one-eighth of the valuation of Belfast; and upon a question which involves the expenditure of money, I think the House ought to listen to seven-eighths of the ratepayers rather than to one-eighth. It is rather a suspicious fact that, with one exception, the proposal to reject the Bill is supported only by Members from Cork, Mayo, and Dublin.

*(4.26.) MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I have no wish to continue the discussion in an acrimonious spirit, but I rise to correct a statement which has been made on the other side of the House. In the Preamble of the Bill, upon page 14, will be found a reference to the indentures of 1783, and again in 1803, and also books of reference containing the names of the persons who were owners, or claimed to be owners, and trustees of the Linen Hall Estate, as far as could be ascertained. It states further that those names have been duly deposited with the Clerks of the Peace of the City of Belfast and the County of Antrim. If the hon. Member for West Belfast knows of any means by which to deposit names which cannot be ascertained I am sure the Town Clerk of Belfast will be glad to be informed. I usually support the suggestions of the Chairman of Committees; but I regret that I cannot do so on this occasion. I think the promoters of the Bill are bound to ask the House to approve of the Bill as it has been submitted, and I ask the House to endorse it as it stands.

(4.28.) MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I am sorry that the hon. Member for South Antrim should never rise for the purpose of making a speech upon an Irish subject without attempting to irritate somebody. On this occasion he has made observations which could be only calculated to excite hostility from this side of the House. He told the House that my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast represents the most illiterate constituency in that city. At all events, that constituency had intelligence enough to elect the most intelligent Member for Belfast. In this case not a single Corporate Body is interested in preventing the adoption of the proposals contained in this Bill. The only persons who are interested are individual citizens, and it is ridiculous to expect any man, however wealthy, to take upon himself the grievous pecuniary burden of petitioning the House and employing Parliamentary agents and counsel in order to oppose the Bill. But this House is competent to deal with this question, which is one of the malversation of public funds. The hon. Member for South Antrim astonished us by stating that there was no trust imposed. That is not so.

MR. MACARTNEY: No public trust.

MR. CLANCY: We are not talking of any other. We are not discussing private trusts, and this House is rarely called upon to do so. This is, I presume, another proof of the supposed superior intelligence of Orange Ulstermen. I maintain that the question of a malversation of public funds is one which the House of Commons ought to deal with; and I trust that hon. Members on this side will insist on carrying on the Debate until we get a more satisfactory explanation.

(4.34.) Colonel SAUNDERSON rose in his place and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put," but Mr. SPEAKER withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

Debate resumed.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): It is a curious thing to find the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh moving the Closure in a Debate on matters of such importance to Belfast citizens. An hon. Member has referred to the illiteracy of the voters for West Belfast. Well, I have the honour of being a voter for that Division, and all I can say is, that if they are illiterate they have not shown it by the choice of their Representatives, for they have elected one who has contributed more to the advancement of Belfast since he entered the House than all the other Members for the City put together. The hon. Member for East Down, in his maiden speech, dealt with only two points—one was the illiteracy of the electors, and the other was his praise of the hon. Baronet who had spoken immediately before him. Well, I have seen his election addresses. I can only remark that he has well used all these phrases before. This is a question of a public trust, and the question is, how is this money to be applied? The hon. Member for South Tyrone told us that we represented only one-eighth of the ratepayers of Belfast. But whose fault is it that the municipal franchise is so limited that in that Division there are so few voters? As a matter of fact, we represent one-third of the inhabitants of Belfast—the third who live in the poorest localities and who require more breathing space. We have the interest of their health at heart. If this transaction is a pure and honest one why should hon. Members object to the inquiry we suggest? I think it is our duty to insist on an inquiry, and to use all the forms of the House in order to obtain one if possible. There is the question of the appointment of the arbitrator. Mr. Murphy, of Belfast, may be a very able man, but I doubt the expediency of appointing a Belfast man at all. Again, he is not a lawyer, and how can he be expected to decide delicate questions of law? While we are anxious to see this Bill passed in a form which will be beneficial to Belfast, we do think the inquiry we ask for should be granted.

MR. SEXTON: I will ask the promoters of the Bill whether, if I withdraw my opposition to the Second Reading, they will assent to the suggestion of the Chairman of Ways and Means? In deference to the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman, I will not divide on the Second Reading. I beg, therefore, to withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

(4.40.) MR. SEXTON: This was intended originally to be a public trust. It belongs to the City of Belfast. I denounce this Bill as an attempt, after a long course of illegal acts, to alienate a public trust by a Parliamentary enactment, and to make large payments of public money to certain individuals. I have spoken in the interests of purity and honesty in the administration of public affairs, and I shall now take a Division on the Motion to refer the Bill, in order to throw the responsibility of what it does on the House itself.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Bill be committed to a Select Committee of Nine Members, Five to be nominated by the House and Four by the Commitee of Selection."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

(4.45.) The House divided:—Ayes 158; Noes 234.—(Div. List, No. 124.)

Bill committed.

(4.57.) MR. SEXTON: I beg now to move the Instruction which has been recommended by the Chairman of Ways and Means. Out of £200,000 the sum of £170,000 is to be spent in the erection of a City Hall, whereas Belfast already has a very commodious City Hall, erected about 20 years ago on almost the same site as that which is now proposed. The provisions of the Bill give no protection to the ratepayers, and I call upon the House to give them protection by passing this Instruction. By providing that one election of Councillors must intervene between the passing of the two resolutions provided for in this Bill you merely allow an opportunity for altering the constitution of one-third of the Council, and the other two-thirds may still have the power of imposing their will on the minority. I call on the House to give the ratepayers the protection which this provision will afford them.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they make provision in the Bill to secure that any resolution of the Municipal Council of Belfast to use the Linen Hall Estate otherwise than as an open space shall not be valid unless it be confirmed by a majority in a poll of the persons qualified to vote at an election of the members of the Municipal Council of Belfast, such poll to be taken in the way and subject to the conditions prescribed in Schedule 1 to the Borough Funds (Ireland Act, 1888."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

(4.59.) MR. J. LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): The power which is given under the Borough Funds Act has been found to work very well in the past. I think this Instruction stands on a somewhat different footing to the last Motion. I decidedly approve of the proposal of the Chairman of Committees, as an assurance that the ratepayers shall have a voice in the disposal of their property. I think that Local Authorities sometimes require a control of this character. I wish to say nothing invidious of the Corporation of Belfast, who are deserving of the greatest respect; but the reasons that induced us to apply the provisions of the borough-funds to English Corporations should lead us to support the proposition in the present case.

(5.1.) MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): As a question concerning Belfast, I can understand hon. Members voting in favour of the exceptional proposal, but the speech of the hon. Member for West Belfast connects it with a general policy to which I, for one, am entirely, utterly opposed, that is to say, the general policy of interposing between municipal representatives and their decision the right to call for a *plébiscite.* That is a proposal which strikes at the root of all Municipal Representative Government. So far as my experience goes, the application of the Borough Funds Act has been in almost every case exercised very much to the injury of Local Government. The carrying out of the Free Libraries Act has, in some cases, been delayed, and even prevented by the operation of this unfortunate proviso, a public benefit though that Act has been shown to be. On general principle it seems to me that, having provided for popular representation, a certain amount of discretion should be allowed to those representatives.

MR. SEXTON: The right hon. Gentleman will allow me to say that one ward in Belfast containing more than a fourth of the ratepayers has no voice at all in the Council.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I continue my own argument. If, in such cases, after having selected your representatives, you then interfere with their discretion by a proviso for reference to a *plébiscite,* you check the free action of Local Government, and you will not have the best men seeking position on the Council. The hon. Member says the system in Belfast is not thoroughly representative; and, if that is so, the way to deal with it is by a reform of the present system in Belfast, not by the introduction of an unnecessary and undesirable proviso.

(5.5.) MR. M. HEALY: Yes, Sir; but before that reform can be applied, this Bill will be carried and £170,000 spent under it. Instead of repeating his general view in relation to the Borough Funds Act, the right hon. Gentleman would have made a more valuable contribution to the Debate if he had addressed himself to the particular Bill before the House. The proposal of my hon. Friend has been advocated and supported not in reference to general policy, but in reference to the conditions of municipal life in Belfast, which have wholly changed during the last 30 or 40 years. The population has enormously increased, and whereas when the Act was passed and the existing division into wards made, the population was not more than 50,000 or 60,000, it is now 250,000. That being so, the present division of the wards is an anomaly and an anachronism, and has resulted, as my hon. Friend has pointed out, in the exclusion from the representation upon the Municipal Council of a third of the population of Belfast. There is not at present at that Council Board a single representative of the Nationalist Party or of the Roman Catholic religion. It is to these special circumstances that my hon. Friend addressed himself. I am not going to discuss the Borough Funds Act. I am not going to discuss the question whether it is or is not right there should be an appeal from a Municipal Corporation to the people themselves before a large expenditure is incurred upon public works; that is not the question. The question is, the Corporation of Belfast being constituted as it is with a third of the people unrepresented, whether in that state of things there should be an appeal to a *plébiscite.* This proposal has been supported by the Chairman of Ways and Means, the highest authority in the House on the subject of Private Bill legislation, and I think we are entitled to some intimation from the Government as to how they propose to treat this proposal, which is as much that of the Chairman of Ways and Means as of my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast.

*(5.10.) MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): We might anticipate that some importance would be attached to the opinion of the Chairman of Ways and Means, and he in definite language has supported this Instruction, and we have not heard a word in opposition to it except from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, who knows nothing about the peculiar position of municipal affairs in Belfast. This question has never been submitted to a *plébiscite* at all. A reference to this was made in the former Debate, but, as a fact, the question of the erection of a Town Hall was not submitted to the people, who will have to pay for it if it is decided upon. We have, too, the anomalous condition of things that the district and population my hon. Friend represents has no voice in the Council. Under the circumstances, I think we are justified in looking for something more than a conspiracy of silence. It is a reasonable proposal in itself, and it has the support of high authority. Whatever justification there may be for the general views expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham upon the Borough Funds Act as a piece of general legislation, here is a special condition of things not to be judged by the general principles in relation to that Act. Here is a large and important city with a third of its ratepayers without civic representation. It appears to me our case is made out, and there is no argument offered against it.

(5.12.) MR. M'CARTAN: The House should not be induced to overlook the importance of this matter because Members opposite are impatient. The question of town halls or open spaces has never been submitted to the ratepayers. In the last *plébiscite* some of the ratepayers voted for an open spaee, and these were declared spoiled votes. I need only refer to the exclusive nature of the municipal representation to confirm what has been said by my hon. Friends, and I think it cannot be denied that the present ratepayers should have a voice in this important matter.

(5.15.) The House divided:—Ayes 186; Noes 254. (Div. List, No. 125.)

QUESTIONS.

THE CORN CROP IN ZULULAND.

MR. WEBB (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies how much was the "considerable quantity of corn" referred to in the following sentence on page 10 of the Report on the [Zululand] Blue Book for 1889 :—

> "The short crop caused a great scarcity of grain to exist, but which was, to some extent, met by the Local Government introducing a considerable quantity of corn, especially for seed purposes, and which was readily purchased by natives in want thereof at cost price"?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): The amount was 255 muids (of 200lbs.) equal to about 93 quarters Imperial measure.

DUBLIN POST OFFICE.

MR. T. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour): I beg to ask the Postmaster General how many vacancies are there in the first class of sorters and overseers in the General Post Office, Dublin; whether it is true that some of these vacancies have existed for 12 months past; and what is the reason for so long a delay in filling them?

A LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. MAXWELL, Wigton): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General, I have to state that the vacancies in the Dublin Post Office are for overseers three and for first class sorters eight. Of the latter three have existed for 12 months. The delay in filling them has been owing to inability on the part of the authorities in Dublin to recommend members of the lower classes as fully qualified for advancement. The Postmaster General hopes soon to have a more favourable Report.

ROUMANIA—THE MURDER OF A MARINE.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.): I wish to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Court Martial appointed by the Roumanian Government has acquitted the soldiers who were accused of murdering the Marine, Page, of H.M.S. *Cocatrice;* and whether the Government propose to take any further steps in the matter?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): The answer to the first part of the question is, yes: but only one has been brought to trial. With regard to the latter part of the question, Her Majesty's Government are awaiting a full Report of the proceedings of the Court Martial. On its receipt, they will consider whether any further steps should be taken.

POLICE SUPERANNUATION.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg, Sir, to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department if, having regard to the importance to the police of Great Britain of their being afforded full opportunity of considering the legislative proposals which will finally determine the question of their superannuation before they are discussed in this House, and also bearing in mind the advanced period of the Session, the Government Bill to this end can now be introduced?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): Her Majesty's Government are fully sensible of the importance of introducing the Superannuation Bill as early as possible. It involves many details which have been engaging my careful attention, but I hope the Bill will be ready in a few days.

THE ALBANY PASSAGE.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if the course outside the Albany Passage, on which Pilot Keating steered the *Quetta* upon an unknown rock on the 28th February, is the one recommended by the Admiralty; if so, is this recommendation withdrawn; and does the Government intend to take any steps towards making a fresh survey of the Torres Straits north of Rockhampton?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The route followed by vessels for many years has been that outside Albany Island, and, as in most cases where waters are only partially surveyed, a line is traced upon the Admiralty chart showing what is considered to be the best course. This line passed one-third of a mile west of the previously unknown rock on which the *Quetta* struck. The line has now been slightly modified; but the passage, as with the whole of the inner route, must always be dangerous until completely surveyed, and even then until properly lighted. There must be a mistake in the second part of the question, as Rockhampton is a town lying 900 miles from the nearest part of Torres Straits. A marine survey of the inner route to Torres Straits, in which the *Quetta* rock lies, has been proceeding at the joint expense of the Imperial and Queensland Governments since 1885, and the surveying vessel *Paluma* will be employed this year in the vicinity of Albany Island.

VOLUNTEERS' AMMUNITION.

MR. A. THOMAS (Glamorgan, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether complaints have reached him that the ammunition served out to the Volunteers is so bad and defective that the majority of those who hitherto earned the highest Capitation Grant fail to do so at present in consequence of the inferior quality of the ammunition?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): No, Sir; complaints of the kind stated in the question have not reached the War Office.

THE NEWTOWNARDS FARMERS' ASSOCIATION.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the resolutions unanimously adopted by the Newtownards Farmers' Association at a meeting held on the 26th May last; and whether he intends to make provision in his Land Purchase Bill in the direction pointed out in these resolutions?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The resolutions referred to do not appear to have reached me officially, nor have I seen any newspaper report of them. I have, therefore, not had the opportunity of considering them.

MEW ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE.

MR. M'CARTAN : I desire to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the five men who are in charge of the lighthouse on Mew Island, off Donaghadee, County Down, are obliged to remain there for a fortnight at a time, and are not allowed to have the use of a boat; and whether, considering that they are the only inhabitants of the island, which is three miles distant from the mainland, he will advise a boat to be left at the island, in order that they may be able to communicate with Donaghadee in case of the illness of any of the men?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.) : It is, for obvious reasons, contrary to the Regulations of the Commissioners of Irish Lights to allow lightkeepers to keep boats. Should assistance be required there is at Mew Island a system of signalling both for day and night, which would cause the regular attending boat to come off from Donaghadee.

LAND COMMISSION—DOWN AND ANTRIM.

MR. M'CARTAN : I desire to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can now state at what date the Sub-Commissioners who were transferred from the Counties of Down and Antrim will return to these Counties to work off the number of arrears of fair-rent applications at present pending in respect of holdings in Down and Antrim?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : The Land Commissioners report that they will arrange to send a Sub-Commission to the Counties of Antrim and Down as soon as the cases disposed of in other counties are brought to a level with those in the two counties mentioned. They are not yet in a position to fix a date.

EUROPEAN COMMERCIAL TREATIES.

SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) : I have to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any steps have yet been taken to nominate the Treaties and Tariffs Committee to confer with the Government in consequence of the general lapsing of European Commercial Treaties in 1892, and which the right hon. Gentleman stated, in March, would be appointed; and if it is yet possible to lay before the House the names of any gentlemen nominated, and to state upon what principles such nominations have been made?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH : The subject is under my consideration, and I am now in communication with several gentlemen upon it. But I am not yet in a position to make a statement.

CRIME IN CYPRUS.

MR. E. ROBERTSON : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government, having regard to the increase of crime and the failure to arrest certain criminals in Cyprus, will cause a searching and independent investigation to be made into the organisation of the Police Force, into the circumstances relating to the murders recently committed in Cyprus, and particularly into those appertaining to the murder of an advocate named Michailides, at Kyrenia, in February last, and the recent case of poisoning of Aghissilaos Artemis in that district?

*BARON H. DE WORMS : The constitution and duties of the Cyprus Police Force have engaged the constant attention of the Colonial Office, and have quite recently formed the subject of inquiry and Report by a strong Local Commission composed of officials and natives; and new measures have been devised for obtaining a better class of recruits for the force, and for distributing them more widely through the villages than heretofore, so that the law-abiding may be encouraged to report crime, and prompter measures may be possible for obtaining evidence against criminals. In these circumstances, the Secretary of State does not propose to direct a new investigation. His attention has not been called to the two cases mentioned by the hon. Member, but he will make inquiry.

NEWFOUNDLAND.

MR. GOURLEY (Sunderland) : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he has received any authentic information, either from the French Government or that of Newfoundland, relative to the alleged landing of French blue-jackets on the French shore; whether he can state the nature of the negotiations now in progress for the purpose of bringing about an amicable settlement, or if it is correct that the Newfoundland Government are willing to repeal the Bait Act, providing the French repeal the Bounty Act of 1883; and if he has received any information, official or otherwise, regarding the alleged refusal of some of the inhabitants to pay Customs Duties, and that steamers trading between Newfoundland and Canada have been unable to unload their cargoes?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: I have already stated that the only foundation for the reported landing of French sailors or marines was that a French officer landed in uniform at the wharf and gave a notice with regard to some fishing nets. Nothing can be said as regards the negotiations until Her Majesty's Government have had an opportunity of conferring with Sir W. Whiteway. No information has been received as to a refusal to pay Customs Dues.

INTERNATIONAL TELEGRAPHIC CONFERENCE.

Mr. J. WILSON (on behalf of Mr Gourley): I wish to ask the Postmaster General if he is aware that the Representative of Lloyd's has proposed to the International Telegraphic Conference, now sitting at Paris, that the Continental States should reduce their samaphore signalling fee to one franc, and that Lloyd's would, in return, reduce their fee to foreign ships to one shilling, or, if necessary, to one franc; and whether he will instruct the Post Office Delegate, now at Paris, to support the proposition of Lloyd's?

Sir H. MAXWELL (on behalf of the Postmaster General): I have to say that the right hon. Gentleman stated on the 6th inst., in reply to a question put by the hon. Member for Dundee, that the British Delegates would be very glad to use their best offices to secure any reduction which the Foreign Governments might see their way to make in the present signalling fee. It may be added that on the representation of the British Delegates the International Telegraphic Conference has agreed to admit a Representative of Lloyd's when the Committee's proposals are under discussion, and that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has arranged for Sir Joseph Crowe, Commercial Attaché for Europe at the Paris Embassy, to lend him his assistance.

THE TEMPERANCE DEMONSTRATION IN HYDE PARK.

Mr. C. DARLING (Deptford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact, as reported in the *Daily Chronicle*, that reporters for the newspapers were, by the persons present on the wagons in Hyde Park as participators in the Temperance Demonstration of last Saturday, received with vulgar and abusive language, and were asked for beer money; whether such language and solicitation is contrary to the Vagrant Acts; and, whether the names of the offenders have been ascertained by the police?

Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): And I wish, before the right hon. Gentleman answers that question, to ask him whether a teetotaller who asks a reporter for "beer money" as a condition of his going on the platform is guilty of a crime or a misdemeanour?

Mr. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that he has heard nothing of the facts alleged in the question of my hon and learned Friend; I am not, therefore, in a position to say whether an offence against the law has been committed by any person.

THE NEW CODE.

Sir RICHARD TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education when the New Education Code will become law, that is, on what date; and whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the new Circular about freedom of education; and if so, when?

The VICE PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Sir W. Hart Dyke, Kent, Dartford): I believe I am correct in stating that the New Code is now law, but, as my hon. Friend will gather from the prefixed Minute, it will not come into operation until September next. I have already promised to lay upon the Table the new Circular as to classification, but as one or two other matters will have to be dealt with the House will see the advantage of including them in one document, which will probably take the form of supplementary instructions, and will be prepared as soon as possible.

PAUPER CHILDREN.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the Guardians of a Metropolitan Union have named a pauper child "South Grove," because she was found on the steps of the South Grove Workhouse; whether he is aware that Boards of Guardians throughout the country frequently give such names to foundlings, which permanently associate with them the unfortunate circumstances of their birth; and whether, by circular, letter, or otherwise, he will point out to Guardians the impropriety and cruelty of this practice?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): My attention has not being drawn to the fact that a pauper child has been given the name of "South Grove" by the Guardians of a Metropolitan Union. I am not aware that there is any such practice as is suggested in the question. If my attention is directed to any case where a name which is reasonably open to objection is given to a child by the Guardians, I shall be quite prepared to communicate with the Guardians on the subject.

INCOME TAX—COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS.

MR. O'HANLON (Cavan, E.): I wish to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will bring in a Bill to enable commercial travellers who pay Income Tax to vote at elections, when they can show their business brings them to many parts of the country, and their only home the hotels at which they stop, also on their showing they have no other right to be registered?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I fear there must be other classes of the community besides commercial travellers whose business makes it difficult for them to qualify by residence for the exercise of a vote at elections, and, though the matter is not strictly within my own province, I think it would be far from easy to frame a measure for making special provisions to enable commercial traveller in particular to vote.

MR. O'HANLON: Does the right hon. Gentleman intend to bring in a measure?

*MR. GOSCHEN: I do not propose to bring in a measure.

ARMY CONTRACTS.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state the names or the number of Inspectors or other officials charged with the duty of seeing that contractors who are bound by their contracts to manufacture upon their own premises, and not to sub-let their contracts, observe that portion of the contract; whether, in all recent contracts and orders for valises and mess tin covers, the factory clause has been insisted on, and what penalty has been inserted for breaking it; and whether he is aware that a large part of the work in connection with these contracts is still being done by a firm notorious for the bad material and work it supplied when itself allowed to contract?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: No special officials have been appointed to inspect contractors. The duty of watching them has been intrusted to the Director of Contracts, who has personally inspected all the accoutrement factories in London. Some of them have also been visited by the Superintendent of Inspectors of General Stores, and it is intended to make periodical inspections in the future. Clothing factories are to be visited by officers from the Clothing Department at Pimlico from time to time. In contracts for valises the factory clause has been insisted on. In that for mess tin covers it was specially waived to enable the hands who have made them for years to continue the work. In this case the workers have been visited in their own homes to ascertain that they were paid directly by the contractor, and that they received the proper rate of wages. As regards the allegation made in the last paragraph of my hon. Friend's question, I can only say that I have no such information

ASSAULT AT MILLSTREET.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether any inquiry is being made into the assault upon a poor woman and her husband, named Sullivan, who were waylaid and dreadfully beaten near Millstreet, County Cork, on Tuesday night last the 3rd instant, on their way home, and, after being attacked and wounded, struggled into the house of a postboy named Buckley, who, in consequence, was stoned by the gang; whether he is aware that the Sullivans were medically treated in the Millstreet Union Hospital by Dr. Leader, who refused to give a certificate to the effect that Sullivan's life was out of danger; whether many similar assaults have taken place near Millstreet during the past year; whether the police have arrested and brought to justice any of the gang notoriously implicated in this and other similar recent outrages; and whether steps will be immediately taken to ascertain who are the employers of the gang? I also wish to ask whether this is a gang of emergency men in the employment of a local Magistrate?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that Sullivan and his wife were assaulted on the night of the 2nd inst. Buckley also states that a stone was thrown at him on the occasion. The doctor did not refuse to give the certificate referred to in the question. Four persons were arrested by the police in connection with the assault. The assault appears to have arisen from a feud between the party of Sullivan and that of a man named Moynihan. Both these men had taken an active part in moonlighting. On the release of the latter from prison after completion of a sentence of penal servitude a large sum of money was collected for him. He believes Sullivan, in conjunction with another man, to have misappropriated the greater part of this money, hence the strained relations between the two. So far as the police are aware, on two previous occasions assaults were committed between these two parties—on October 1, 1889, when both sides were summoned to Petty Sessions and punishment inflicted by the Magistrates, and on April 14 last, when an attack was made by Sullivan's party on that of Moynihan. Summonses were also issued in this case against both sides, and punishment inflicted by the Magistrates.

Dr. TANNER: Is it not a fact that Moynihan is a friend and *protegé* of Mr. Jeremiah Hagarty, recently advanced to be a Justice of the Peace? How is it that Moynihan has been left alone by the police, while the other man has been prosecuted?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: In the answer I have just given I have stated that both of these parties were punished for the assaults they committed.

*__Mr. FLYNN__ (Cork, N.): Is there any grounds for the belief in the locality that favouritism is shown to the emergency men guilty of misconduct on account of being connected with Mr. Hagarty?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I should think there is no foundation for it.

Dr. TANNER: Will the right hon. Gentleman take steps to prevent any further outrages and demonstrations of this kind on the part of his political friends?

THE CROYDON COUNTY COURT.

Mr. MILVAIN (Durham): I wish to ask the Attorney General whether he is aware of the fact mentioned in the *Law Times* of April 19, that the present Registrar of the County Court of Surrey, holden at Croydon, is a barrister; if so, whether this is in conformity with the 25th section of the County Court Act, 1888; if not, whether he will cause steps to be taken to enforce compliance with the Act of Parliament?

Sir R. WEBSTER: The Registrar of the Croydon County Court was appointed before the Act of 1888, and at the time of his appointment he was a duly qualified solicitor; but I believe that within the last few months he has become a member of the Bar. His rights as existing Registrar are reserved under Section 188 of the Act of 1888. I am not prepared to say that any breach of the Act has taken place. If necessary, the point can be raised and determined formally.

THE IRISH LAND PURCHASE BILL.

Mr. PINKERTON (Galway): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the Government intend to proceed with the Purchase of Land and Congested Districts (Ireland) Bill?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I am not in a position to say to-day.

MR. E. HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): This year?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Yes.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Will the Government conclude the Licensing Bill before taking the Land Purchase Bill?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: We desire to do so.

MR. SEXTON: That is the present intention?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: That is the present intention.

INDIAN COUNCILS BILL.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, in consequence of what took place at the close of business last night, when we were informed by the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill that it would be put down for Thursday, whether on Thursday the Bill will be actually taken, or, if not, it may be carried on to a date at which it can be taken, as great inconvenience is now being felt by Members interested in the Bill and who wish to take part in the Debate. My question to the right hon. Gentleman now is, can he possibly say when the Bill will be taken; and, if not, will he name a day before which it shall not be taken, and so relieve Members from the uncertainty of coming down to take part in a Debate which may not come on.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am very sorry that hon. Members should feel any inconvenience with regard to the course of public business; but hon. Gentlemen have been a sufficiently long time in the House to know that it is not always possible to make provision that Orders of the Day causing the attendance of Members shall be reached, as, unfortunately, it is not always competent for the House to reach them. We had hoped that the Order would be reached in the ordinary course of things, but in that we were disappointed. Under the circumstances, I am not in a position to say when the Order will be taken; but I will endeavour, as far as possible, to meet the convenience of hon. Gentlemen.

MR. BRADLAUGH: May I ask whether the Bill will not be taken on Thursday, because there was not an absolute pledge that it should. It was the understanding, I believe, that at least two days' notice should be given, so that I might communicate with hon. Members interested in the measure.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not able to say whether it will be taken or not on that day.

IRISH LIGHT RAILWAYS.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I wish to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the statement is correct which has appeared in the Irish papers, to the effect that the Treasury have decided to give a free grant under the provisions of the Light Railways Act of last Session, to the proposed line from Donegal to Killybegs, in priority to the other lines recommended by the Commissioners appointed under that Act, and passed with guarantees for working expenses by the Grand Jury of the County of Donegal; whether this is the line which the Royal Commission on Irish Public Works reported against at page 40 of their Report; whether this is the line promoted by Mr. James Barton, C.E., and reported upon by Mr. James Price, C.E.; and whether, as a matter of fact, it presents engineering defects similar to, but very much worse, than the line from Galway to Clifden promoted by Mr. Price, and favourably reported upon by Mr. Barton, but which the Midland Great Western Railway Company decline to work, owing to those defects?

MR. JACKSON: I am not in a position to say that the Treasury have decided to give a free grant to the proposed line from Donegal to Killybegs, but this is one of the lines recommended for a free grant. It will probably be necessary to decide as regards particular lines before the decision as to all the lines to be aided can be arrived at. The Report of the Royal Commission dealt with routes rather than lines, and, therefore, does not apply to this line. The Chairman of the Commission of Inquiry was General Hutchinson.

MR. CLANCY: Is it a fact that a scheme promoted by Mr. Price was favourably reported upon and decided by

Mr. Barton. Can the hon. Gentleman state?

Mr. JACKSON: No, Sir; I cannot answer that question.

Mr. CLANCY: Will the hon. Gentleman give us any information on the subject? This matter has been before the House several times, and we have been informed that there are several Commissioners employed in investigating the lines. Is it the fact that the decision in each case practically rests with the engineering member of the Commission?

Mr. JACKSON: No, Sir.

Mr. CLANCY: Is it not the fact that Mr. George Morris, of the Local Government Board in Ireland, informed some of the promoters of the lines in Galway that the other members of the Commission were merely there as advisers to the engineering member of the Commission, who has the whole thing in his hands?

Mr. JACKSON: I have no knowledge of it.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): When are the Commissioners likely to give us a general Report on these lines? I know it takes a long time. Can the hon. Gentleman say when we will have the Report?

Mr. JACKSON: No, Sir.

Mr. PINKERTON: I wish to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that a Memorial had been presented by the clergy of Connemara, and resolutions passed unanimously by the Grand Jury of the county, by the Grand Jury of the county of the town, and by the Town Commissioners of Galway, in favour of steps being taken by the Government to insure the early construction of the line of railway from Galway to Clifden (approved by the Royal Commission), he will use his influence to prevent any further delay in commencing this work of public utility?

Mr. JACKSON: Certainly, Sir; I will use any influence I have to prevent unnecessary delay in arriving at a decision as to the Galway and Clifden Railway.

OFFICIALS OF THE MINT.

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.): I wish to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if any extra remuneration has been granted to the officials of the Mint in respect of the extra work and longer hours imposed upon them by the large silver coinage of the year 1889; if not, whether he will take into consideration their claim to further remuneration?

*Mr. GOSCHEN: At the end of March, 1889, a gratuity equal to two months' pay was awarded by the Treasury to all persons except the staff officers employed in the Mint at fixed salaries or wages, the work of the Department having been excessive from the early part of 1887 to the end of February, 1889. Since then the matter has not been brought again before me, and I may say, in all courtesy, that I think it more expedient that the Deputy Master of the Mint should bring the question before the Treasury rather than that it should reach us through a political channel.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA BILL.

Mr. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea): Can the right hon. Gentleman state when the Western Australia Bill will be proceeded with?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I am sorry to say I cannot.

MR. BALFOUR AND MR. J. REDMOND.

Mr. J. REDMOND (Wexford, N.): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary a question of which I have given him private notice. Is the right hon. Gentleman correctly reported in the *Times* as having made the following statement on the previous evening:—

> "They must remember that the houses of those persons who attempted to redeem had been wrecked by the mob. I stated before that a Member of this House had boasted that those things had occurred. I believe he controverted that. What he did was to give to the reporter of a newspaper owned by himself, and the editor of which was a personal friend of his, an account which I quoted accurately"?

I also wish to ask whether I am the Member referred to?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes; the hon. Member is the Member of the House to whom I referred, and the quotation he gives from the *Times* newspaper fairly and accurately represents what I said on the occasion, with the exception that I did not say that he was the owner, but I did say that the editor of the newspaper was a personal friend of his. I have here the report of the interview in the *People* newspaper. It says, that on Tuesday evening Mr. John E. Redmond, M.P., passed through New Ross, and in an interview with its representative spoke of affairs at Tipperary. He said he had

> "Never seen such excitement in his life as there is in the town of Tipperary at this moment. The houses of the men who paid their rents are there left alone by everyone. The houses of these men have been nearly wrecked, and there cannot be got in the County of Tipperary a glazier to replace the windows which have been smashed to pieces. The combination of the Smith-Barry tenants is one of the best in Ireland."

(6.2.) MR. J. REDMOND: I am sure the House will in fairness allow me to say two or three words in the way of personal explanation. What I have to say may seem rather startling to the right hon. Gentleman. I never gave any such interview as that which has been quoted to the representative of any newspaper whatever, and I never made any statement which could possibly be twisted or distorted into approval of the occurrences in Tipperary—either in an interview, in a speech, or in any other manner. In my own justification, as this charge has been made against me of boasting of the wrecking of these houses, and as the charge had been made that not one of the Irish Members had denounced these occurrences, I ask permission to state that at the earliest possible moment after the breaking of the windows by certain persons in Tipperary—which is the disturbance referred to—in September last, namely, on the following Sunday, September 8, I myself publicly denounced at a meeting in the town of Tipperary those occurrences in the following words. I will read the report of my speech that appeared in the *Freeman's Journal* of Monday, September 9. It is as follows:—

> "There were two plain and manifest duties which they at once were bound to fulfil towards these men" (namely, the tenants who had combined). "The first of these duties he was there to speak about, with a full sense of his responsibility, candidly, and without the slightest fear as to whether his words would be well received or not. The first duty they owed to these men was to put down disorder in the town. He (Mr. Redmond) had read with pain of the breaking of windows and the throwing of stones. He was not afraid to speak his mind to Tipperary men. . . . . Stone-throwing and window-breaking were unworthy of Tipperary. It was a cowardly proceeding, and was found to bring injury to the cause of the Smith-Barry tenantry and the cause of Ireland generally. He asked them to put down disorder with a strong hand, and thus to deprive their enemies of the only weapon they had to use against them—that is, the weapon of misrepresenting their movement as a lawless, turbulent, and an unjust one."

That speech was made immediately after the occurrences. It was made on the spot, in the town of Tipperary. It was the last public meeting which the Irish Members were allowed to address freely in that town, with the exception of those meetings where Englishmen were present; and I must say I think it a strange circumstance that the right hon. Gentleman should publicly accuse Members here of not only not denouncing these occurrences, but of boasting of them, when he ought to have had a knowledge of that speech of mine.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know that it is part of my duty to read every speech delivered by hon. Gentlemen opposite. I, of course, accept at once with the greatest pleasure the contradiction which has just been given by the hon. Gentleman of an elaborate report in a newspaper, published in his own constituency. I have not given the House an adequate idea of the elaborateness of the account of the alleged conversation reported in a newspaper which is friendly to the hon. Member, and of which the editor has been twice a martyr to the National cause—once under the administration of the right hon. Gentleman opposite and once under mine. I presume that the hon. Gentleman has taken pains to prevent the evil effects and pernicious consequences which would necessarily be produced in the locality from this report of his words. I have no doubt that the hon. Gentleman sent a distinct contradiction to the editor, but, unfortunately, that contradiction was not brought to my notice.

MR. J. REDMOND: Am I to understand that this alleged interview, published in a small country print, was brought under the right hon. Gentleman's notice, and that the long report of my speech in the *Freeman's Journal* was not brought to his knowledge?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The occurrence in question was reported in the *People* of the 14th of September last year.

MR. J. REDMOND: That is not the date. It was the 4th of September, and my speech in Tipperary was on the 8th.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It was in the beginning of September. Whether I had the good fortune to read the excellent observations made by the hon. Gentleman on the occasion referred to I do not know. If I had known that the hon. Gentleman had delivered that speech I would have given him great credit for it, as such speeches are only too rare. But I read the extracts from the alleged interview that were brought to my official knowledge, and I thought they were most significant. I will no longer say that the hon. Gentleman used the expressions attributed to him, though I do say that as the statement appears in a paper which supports his Party, and circulates in his constituency, I was justified in attaching significance to it.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to,—Suck River Drainage (Provision of Funds) Bill, without Amendment.

RATING AND VALUATION (SCOTLAND).

Select Committee nominated of,—The Lord Advocate, Mr. Baird, Sir Charles Dalrymple, Sir Archibald Orr Ewing, Colonel Malcolm, Mr. Shaw-Stewart, Mr. Mark Stewart, Mr. Somervell, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Hugh Elliot, Mr. J. B. Balfour, Mr. Barbour, Mr. Joseph Bolton, Dr. Cameron, Dr. Hunter, Mr. M'Ewan, and Mr. Edmund Robertson.—*Mr. Edmund Robertson.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LOCAL TAXATION (CUSTOMS AND EXCISE) DUTIES BILL.—(No. 244.)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

*(6.11.) MR. SPEAKER: The first (Lord R. Churchill's) Instruction is in order. The second is too vague, nor can the Committee be asked in such very general terms to lay down principles on which licences are to be extinguished. That part referring to maximum value it is already within the power of the Committee to entertain and deal with. With reference to the Instruction standing in the name of the hon. Member for Rotherham, having given my best attention to it, it appears to me that, as a sum has been allocated to the Local Authorities by a previous Bill, now an Act, to be appropriated for purposes to be defined by a Bill in this Session, it will be competent for the Committee to vary the allocation of that sum to another purpose than that specified by the Bill, and for a Member to move that it should be applied, not to extinguishing licences, but to the purposes of technical education. Under these circumstances, it will not be necessary to move the Instruction, as the Committee will have the power to do what the Instruction requires them to do.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

(6.14.) MR. PICTON (Leicester): I wish to move to leave out the first words "out of." The Amendment requires explanation, but I can show in a very few words what it means. Its significance has to be brought out by a number of consequential Amendments, the result of adopting which would be that the line indicated to the House just now as possible in the Committee would be adopted, and the application of the allowances arising from Local Taxation (Customs and Excises) Duties would be somewhat varied. The Committee will best understand my Amendment if I read out the clause in the form it would take if my Amendment, with consequential alterations, were agreed to. The clause would run thus—

> "The English share of the Local Taxation Customs Excise Duties paid to the Local Taxation Account on account of any financial year shall be distributed amongst the several County Funds and carried to the Exchequer Contribution Accounts of these funds respectively and applied to the Local Government Act of 1888 and shall be the subject of an adjustment between the Counties and County Boroughs by the Commissioners under that Act in proportion to the amount contributed by each County and County Borough from Licence Duty."

My strong reason for moving this change in the clause is that it will leave the municipalities in the possession of more freedom than they will otherwise possess. The Amendment will not in the slightest degree interfere with, or lessen, the amount which may be applied to police superannuation, which would be dealt with in Clause 4. I do not think it is inconceivable that if the Local Authorities were left free to deal with this money as they like, some of them would occasionally buy up public house premises; but they would buy up without laying down such a prejudicial principle as that which is involved in other parts of the Bill, notably in Sub-section

1 of Clause 1. They would buy them up because, probably, they could make a better use of the ground on which they stood, and there would be no generally-admitted claim to compensate on the part of licence holders. Therefore, the adoption of the Amendment would not necessarily interfere with the object that the Government say they have in view, namely, the provision of facilities for lessening the number of public houses. The strongest argument that I can urge for the Amendment is one which concerns the moral sentiments of a large portion of the population. I earnestly hope the Government will re-consider the matter before they attempt to enforce on the local Representatives of the people of the country a duty or a necessity which all manifestations of opinion show to be bitterly painful to them. In nine cases out of 10, if the Government proposal remains in the Bill, it will not be availed of, and the County Councils will allow the money to remain idle——

(6.17.) THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must marshal his arguments. His argument is much wider than his Amendment, and affects a question dealt with by subsequent Amendments.

(6.18.) MR. PICTON: I am only now moving to strike out the words "out of," but I have a difficulty in dealing with the matter unless I can show the alteration I desire to bring about in the clause. I will only say the adoption of the Amendment will give the Government an opportunity of conciliating a large number of persons whose moral qualities and public spirit place them among the most estimable members of the community.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 11, to leave out the words "out of."—(*Mr. Picton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'out of' stand part of the Clause."

*(6. 20.) THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The hon. Member, I think, will scarcely expect otherwise than to hear from me that the Government cannot accept the Amendment he has moved, which would have a far reaching effect. The hon. Member asks that the County Councils may have charge of the money given into their hands, and have perfect freedom of action as to the manner in which they shall dispose of it. One of the purposes to which the money is proposed to be applied is the superannuation of the police. The hon. Member says if the Amendment is accepted further Amendments will be moved by which the Authorities will be compelled to devote a portion of the funds to police superannuation, so that with one hand he gives these bodies perfect freedom of action, and with the other proposes that they shall have no freedom of action so far as the superannuation of the police is concerned. I do not think there is much between us with reference to that particular duty of the Local Authorities. The Government think it a right thing that when this money is given over one of the duties imposed on the Local Authorities should be to provide for that which most public men have for years past considered a right and proper purpose. We have the utmost regard for the feelings of those whom the hon. Member has referred to, but we believe the operations of our proposals will be necessarily in the direction which they would desire. Therefore, we are unable to accept the proposal.

(6.24.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 254; Noes 190.—(Div. List, No. 126.)

(6.40.) MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I beg to move the omission of Sub-section 1. Mr. Courtney, I should be justified upon this occasion in moving that you report Progress if I was disposed to take that course. I know it would be characterised as obstructive, but if ever there was a case in which the Committee would be justified in reporting Progress, this is it. We have now arrived at the 10th of June, and we have not yet had laid on the Table of the House the Returns showing the appropriation of the money voted for the purposes of local taxation for the year ending March 31st last. I have asked for this Return over and over again. The First Lord of the Treasury has done his best to fulfil the promise he made, that we should have this information. We are told that the Inland Revenue cannot supply it, and then that the Local Government Board are not in a position to do so. I have had some experience of the Inland Revenue, and I am sure that if the Treasury had intimated that they wanted these figures, the Return would have been forthcoming weeks ago. I am sure that they know to a shilling what was the amount allocated in the year ending 31st of March last, and I am equally certain that the Local Government Board know now how that sum has been allocated. It is a very vital point in dealing with this question, because many of us contend that the appropriation has been unfair, that the boroughs have not received their share as compared with the counties; but our allegation is worth nothing; we require evidence as to how the money has been appropriated. This, however, is not my only ground for demurring to the present proposal. We are asked to vote a considerable sum of money for the purpose of police superannuation. In the discussion on the Second Reading I asked the Government whether, before the Committee stage, they would lay on the Table of the House the Bill they intended to bring in showing how they intended to deal with this question of police superannuation? I was told there was every probability that the Bill would be laid on the Table. That Bill has not been laid on the Table, and we are now asked to vote this money without having before us one scrap of information as to how the Government intend to allocate the money. The House has already had experience of the intolerable difficulty of discussing one Bill upon another, and therefore I shall have to apologise to the House if, in the absence of information, I make some blunders. I can only deal with the facts and figures we have before us, and I will endeavour as briefly as possible to show why £150,000 of this money should not be voted for police superannuation. The President of the Local Government Board has assumed that the object of the police superannuation is a most desirable one, on the ground that every prominent Member for many years has been in favour of such a scheme, and that great prominence has been given to the fact that the proposals of the Government include this question. For my own part I quite agree that the police should be superannuated, and if the scheme had been brought forward for the first time I would have been in favour of it. But statements have been made which have very greatly misled the public, statements to the effect that we are now going to establish police superannuation for the first time, and that it is a most desirable thing to put a tax on spirits in order to superannuate the police. But the police have been superannuated for about half a century. I think that there is hardly a county or borough where a superannuation fund does not exist at the present moment. There are enormous numbers of police in receipt of pensions under the Superannuation Fund, and therefore any statements that we are now going to vote money for the purpose of superannuating the police are misleading and inaccurate. You are going to vote money for the purpose of adding to the large grants you have already made to Local Taxation out of Imperial funds, and it is an absolute misnomer to say that this money is going to be devoted to the superannuation of the police. I have already said that the Superannuation Fund has been in existence for the past half century. In 1839, the County Police Force of this country was established. The Act was, however, only an enabling Act, and it was not until 1856 that the establishment of the police was made compulsory. Counties had originally the option of having a Police Force. The experiment was tried for 17 years before it was made compulsory, but mark you, although the establishment of the Police Force was optional in the year 1839, so early as 1840, which is just 50 years ago, this House established a Police Superannuation Fund. In the first place, Parliament required that, for the purposes of the fund, a deduction of 2½ per cent. should be made from the pay of every constable. Secondly, that the stoppages of constables' pay during sickness, all fines on constables for misconduct, and certain portions of the fines imposed on drunken persons, and so forth, should be appropriated for the same fund; and, lastly, that money arising from the sale of worn or cast-off clothing supplied for the use of the constables should be paid into the fund. At the present time the capital value of the fund is over a million sterling. The Act of 1872 prescribed that any part not exceeding a moiety of the penalty under that Act might, if the Court so directed, be paid to the fund. If that is so in counties, what has been the history so far as the boroughs are concerned? The old Municipal Corporation Act—5th and 6th William IV.—enabled boroughs to award compensation to constables for wounds or injuries received in the performance of their duty, or on their being worn out in the service. When the borough police were put upon their proper footing by the 11th and 12th Victoria, the old funds were merged in the new fund, and the boroughs were required to appropriate the same sources of Revenue I have just described to the Superannuation Fund, in addition to a weekly contribution from all ranks of the police, as nearly as might be equal to 1-36th part of the pay. The Committee will ask what is the superannuation allowance which a policeman may get. By the Act of 1840, a constable may be recommended for a pension of not more than half pay—a very liberal pension—if he has only served 15 years, and less than 20 years. If a constable has served 20 years and upwards, he is entitled to a pension equal to two-thirds of his pay. If he is under 60 years of age, it is a necessary condition that he should produce a certificate of incapacity to discharge his duties. In one case alone, the whole pay may be awarded, namely, in a case where the constable has received injuries in the actual execution of his duties, which incapacitate him from work. The question came before various Home Secretaries as to the extent to which this superannuation scheme was being carried out. The hon. Baronet the Member for one of the Divisions of Essex (Sir H. Selwin-Ibbetson) brought the question again and again under the notice of Parliament, and, in 1875, a Committee was appointed to inquire into the subject. Amongst other witnesses, the Committee called Dr. Farre, the eminent statistician, to speak as to the condition of the fund at that time. In 1877, another Committee was appointed, and it came to the conclusion that, under the circumstances, and having regard to the conditions of police constables, it was not a wise or a proper policy to throw the men back simply upon such arrangements as they themselves might make for provision for old age; the Committee thought it to the interest of the State that there should be a proper Police Superannuation Fund kept on foot. The men complained then, as I suppose they complain to-day, of the fixed age of 60, as imposing hardly on those men who joined the Force when young. A great deal of evidence was submitted to the Committee on that question. The evidence was taken of Members of the Watch Committees of some of the most important towns and cities, and also of various chief constables. All the witnesses concurred that after 25 years' good service a constable had practically given all his best years and energies to the Force. I believe that was the opinion arrived at by my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt), who was at the Home Office for several years, and who thoroughly investigated the case in reference to the Metropolitan Police. But let me come to the question of what was the then state of the Fund, because I apprehend that the Government will endeavour to justify their present situation on the ground that the fund is not sufficient for the payment of pensions. The Council which provided that the fund should be established also provided that any deficiency should be made up out of the rates, and, therefore, so far as the policemen are concerned, the Superannuation Fund was complete; whatever deficiency there may be is entirely a question of the rates. Dr. Farre proposed, in the first instance, to deal with all the counties by themselves, and with all the boroughs by themselves. Taking the counties first, he showed that, in order to ensure the payment of pension, the annual contributions to the fund should be £59,000, while, as a matter of fact, the contributions in 1876 were only £38,852. Thus, according to Dr. Farre, there was in the counties an annual deficiency of £20,000, which had to be made up out of the rates if the proper system were adopted. But he says the Borough Superannuation Funds, considered in like manner, showed a surplus of £88,000 annually. Therefore, you have on the figures this state of things displayed, that the counties did not contribute what they ought to have contributed to make the fund solvent, and that the boroughs had contributed largely in excess of the necessary amount. The House will see the force of the reason for which I press for further information, and that I am justified in my contention, which was maintained in 1888, that the boroughs are treated unfairly, and that a great advantage is given to the counties. The Committee had all the figures before them, and two schemes were proposed, what may be called a "rate" scheme and an "amalgamation" scheme. Under the rate scheme the fund system was to be abandoned, and, instead of a fund, pensions were to be charged upon the rates, each police area providing for itself. I am not going to argue this scheme, but there is great simplicity about the proposal that pensions to the police should form an item in the annual charge for the cost of the police, just as pay and clothing. Then there was the amalgamation scheme, the retention of the Superannuation Fund, enlarged by contributions from other sources, an amalgamation of the funds of a county apportioned according to districts, and upon the lines of this scheme the present system it appears to me is to run. This, however, is matter of pure speculation, because the present scheme is hidden from us. The Committee found that the starting of such a fund would require adjustment of a special and elaborate character, because in some places the fund was in excess of requirements, and in other cases it was almost exhausted, exactly the state of things we find to-day. The upshot was that the Committee, after going through a variety of reasons, with which I need not trouble the House, came to the opinion that the amalgamation scheme was impracticable, and then they considered the rate scheme with favour. They thought there were some objections to it, one being that possibly the police might not be so zealous in enforcing penalties when these went to the rates instead of to the Superannuation Fund; but in a carefully considered and statesmanlike manner the Committee of 1877 presented their Report, the general upshot of which was in favour of securing the police pensions upon the district rates directly, and against a general amalgamation scheme, which they regarded as impracticable. The effect of the evidence given before the Committee showed that whereas the annual contributions to the Police Superannuation Fund by the counties was too low, that of the boroughs was too high. The House will remember that from 1877 to 1880 Parliament was far more busy attending to European affairs than upon such matters as police superannuation, and no action was taken until 1882, when, my right hon. Friend (Sir W. Harcourt) being Home Secretary, a Bill was brought in carrying out the recommendations of the Committee of 1877, so far as they were approved by the then Government. My right hon. Friend then, in introducing the Bill, admitted the great dissatisfaction that existed as to the uncertainty of pensions, a constable entering at 21 not being able to obtain a pension until he reached the age of 60, unless previously receiving a certificate of incompetency, and a term of 25 years service was provided in the Bill. Provision was also made for the widow of a constable killed in the discharge of his duty, and an allowance provided for each of his children under 15. There were many other administrative details, but the Bill did not carry out the recommendations of the Committee in regard to making superannuations a charge upon the rates; it provided various means for strengthening the fund and placing it in a solvent condition. The Bill of 1882 was met with legitimate opposition—such as is called obstruction now—from a small number of County Members, and the Bill did not pass. Other Bills were introduced in 1883 and 1884, and I myself had the honour of introducing another in 1886. It must, however, be borne in mind that all those Bills dealt with the administration of the fund, and did not propose to provide subscriptions from the Imperial funds in aid of the local rates. Now, I must trouble the House with a few figures to show how the pension funds stand to-day in boroughs and counties; figures relating exclusively to England and Wales, and, for convenience, I separate the City and Metropolitan Police from the others, as they stand upon a totally different footing, and are under wholly different conditions. The Home Secretary has laid on the Table an interesting Return as to the condition of the funds; and the Return shows that the Metropolis presents a remarkable contrast to the counties and boroughs.

In England and Wales the total strength of the Police Force, including Chief Constables and Inspectors, is 37,735 men, of whom 11,826 are in the counties, 10,778 in the boroughs, and 15,131 in the Metropolis, including the City. The large proportion of 7,698 men are receiving pensions from the fund; and of these 2,105 are in the counties, 1,302 in the boroughs, and 4,283 in the Metropolis. Last year there was paid in pensions £371,870—£96,673 in the counties, £65,114 in the boroughs, and the large proportion of £210,000 in the Metropolis. The deficiency to be provided out of the rates was £182,460; and of this the counties had to raise £28,576, the boroughs £4,297, and the Metropolis £149,000. The Capital Fund available at the end of the year was £1,208,722; and of that £588,529 belonged to the counties, £614,677 to the boroughs, and £5,415 to London. The counties with no fund at all are Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, Sussex, Worcester, and Denbigh. In nearly all the cases where there is a deficiency to be met out of the rates, no Capital Fund has been established. In the other cases there is a Capital Fund; and it is fair to argue that if public money is to be voted now there must, in equity, be an adjustment as between those who have done their duty and those who have left it undone. As regards the boroughs generally, their Police Superannuation Funds are in a thoroughly sound and solvent state, and they are sufficient to meet the claims that are made upon them. The same is true of most of the counties. I wish to call the attention of Members for the Metropolis to the state of the Metropolitan Police Fund. I do this with considerable diffidence, for I feel there are many Members much better able to deal with this part of the question than I am. But I want to call the attention of Metropolitan Members to this, in common with the remarkable subvention now proposed. What is the state of the Metropolitan Police Fund, as shown in the accounts for the year ending March 31st of this year? Although the Receiver for the Metropolitan Police has not the means and appliances of the Inland Revenue or the Local Government Board, he has his statement ready up to that date. I find that last year the Metropolitan Police received from the Local Taxation Account £584,000, and from the rates £731,000. I want my hon. Friends to mark these figures, for they give a clear indication, in my opinion, as to where this sum of £150,000 is going. The other sources of Revenue bring the total up to £1,500,000. Out of this fund, £149,000 is paid for retired allowances, so that the Metropolitan Police Fund pays its way. There is another point. After having paid off all the charges I have mentioned there was in hand at the end of the year £186,000. Therefore, the fund is perfectly solvent. Parliament is now asked to put into the hands of the Receiver £150,000 more, though it is impossible for any Administration to grant pensions on a more liberal scale than is done by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby. That £150,000 means an increase in the Metropolitan Police without the control of Parliament. I protest against the granting of this money for the imaginary purpose of creating a fund which has in reality existed for 50 years, and against which the only complaint brought is that of defective administration.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 14, to leave out Sub-section 1.—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (1) stand part of the Clause."

*(7.35.) THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I do not propose to follow the right hon. Gentleman through the figures he has given, but I will touch only those points which seem material to the clause. With the general outline drawn by the right hon. Gentleman I have nothing to quarrel. It appears to me that the right hon. Gentleman has not laid sufficient stress upon the recommendation of the Committee of 1877, which formed the turning-point in the action of successive Secretaries of State from that time. That Committee was appointed in consequence of the numerous complaints received, especially from the Provincial Forces, with reference to superannuation. The grievance was that, although there was a Superannuation Fund, it was not spent as it ought to be but the Authorities acted, as it was alleged—and I wish hon. Members to understand that I do not identify my-

self with that complaint—in a capricious and arbitrary manner. It was a frequent complaint that while a pension was withheld from one man it was granted to another who was in favour with the Authorities, and this uncertain and precarious state of things constituted a grievance. The right hon. Gentleman has actually taken credit to the boroughs for having smaller pension lists in relation to the number of their Forces than the counties; yet it was that very fact which led to the complaints and to the legislation for which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby is so distinguished. Dr. Farre made extensive calculations, occupying nearly two years, to find out what became of 100,000 of the police entering and leaving the Force from all causes. He found that in the Metropolis 13,800 men had pensions; in the counties only 12,000; and in the boroughs, only 7,900. The proportion at the time was in the Metropolis, 14 pensions per 100 men; in the counties, 12 pensions per 100 men; and in the boroughs, less than eight per 100 men; and it was this marked disproportion which gave rise to the complaints. The Provincial Authorities dismissed their men without pensions, and caused the disproportion into which the Committee inquired. All early statutes left the granting of pensions optional, but for a good many years it has been the duty by law of every Local Authority to form a Superannuation Fund. and the deductions which have been made from the pay of the men ought to have accumulated, yet hon. Members will find, on reference to a Return recently made to this House that in the case of 35 boroughs in which a Superannuation Fund ought to exist no single man is receiving a pension. These are startling facts. Deductions from the pay of the police have been made for years. I hope that those deductions have been invested, and are in existence now. It must be remembered, too, that these are not new boroughs. They have been in existence many years. The boroughs, and, in a less degree, the counties, have not made for their Police Force so large a provision as Parliament wished them to make. The right hon. Gentleman opposite has brought forward successive Bills giving policemen a right to a pension, and depriving the Local Authorities of their right to decide whether pensions, should be granted or not. All those Bills aimed at this, to correct the fault of both boroughs and counties in having given too little money to the pension charge. The object of those Bills was to enable a policeman to know what his pension will be under given circumstances. That is what has been done in the Metropolis, where it has resulted in the number of pensions that the right hon. Gentleman has adverted to. Our Bill will be largely based upon the lines of the Bills brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, though I have made some alterations in matters of detail. The effect of a Bill based on these Bills would be to increase the number of pensioners in the counties, and still more in the boroughs; and, consequently, there will be thrown on the Superannuation Funds considerable extra burdens, and, therefore, we think it necessary to make this provision to meet them. The right hon. Gentleman opposite says that the funds, especially in the case of the Metropolitan Force, are already sufficient for the purpose. On that point I take distinct issue.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: It comes out of the rates.

*MR. MATTHEWS: Very often it is the case that a policeman earns his pension when he has been in the Force from 15 to 25 years, and does the right hon. Gentleman contend that the ratepayer of to-day is to bear the whole burden of the pension earned during the 15 previous years? Does the right hon. Gentleman think that that is a satisfactory method of adjusting the pension charges?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: That is what the Select Committee recommends.

*MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, I am sorry to say they do. But they also recommend that the contribution from year to year should be changed into a terminable annuity.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: No; the recommendation is that the existing fund should be changed into terminable annuities.

*MR. MATTHEWS: Well, that may be so, but it is not worth while discussing that question. It seems to me you are imposing on the ratepayers, the day the pension is granted, a most unreasonable burden, unless you ensure that they receive some aid from the ratepayers of the years in which the pension is earned. Remember that the funds were not sufficient in 1877, any excess which might then have existed being due to the facts that the boroughs had an unusually small number of pensioners. I have taken the trouble, however, to get out the figures of the income from all sources of the Superannuation Fund in the years 1874, 1883, and 1888. I find that in the case of the counties the income in 1874 was £55,834; in 1883 £64,762; and in 1888 £67,240. In the boroughs it was in 1874 £52,000, and in 1883 and 1888 £52,000. The payments in the counties have grown from £30,000 in 1874 to £100,000 in 1888; and in the boroughs from £27,000 in 1874 to £58,000 in 1888. You consequently now have a deficiency of nearly £33,000 in the counties, and of £5,495 in the boroughs. Nobody, looking at the state of the Superannuation Funds throughout the country, can say that they are now in a satisfactory condition, or that they will be able to meet the demands upon them if the proposal to make the granting of pensions a matter of right instead of discretion passes into law. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton actually had the courage to tell the House that the Metropolitan Fund is solvent.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I never said it was solvent. I simply said that after appropriating £140,000 out of the Superannuation Fund there was still a sum of £180,080 in hand at the end of the year.

*MR. MATTHEWS: I have no doubt there is a balance at the bank, but I think the right hon. Gentleman should have told the House that the Fund has not existed since the year 1856, and successive Secretaries of State have found themselves obliged to fall back on the current rates, The total expenditure is £193,000 a year and the income from odd sources £55,000 a year, so that the deficit of £139,000 a year has to be met out of the Police Fund generally. Clearly, then, the Metropolitan Police Fund is in need of a subvention. To overtake the annual expenditure which now falls on the Fund in respect of superannuation would need the investment of a sum of £6,000,000, and surely this one fact justifies us in providing a nest egg. In fact, all these funds are more or less in a state of insolvency. I do not think it is necessary I should detain the House. I may say that we do not propose to make any difference in the treatment of boroughs and counties, compared one with another, in proportion to their solvency. It does not seem right that a Government subvention of this sort should depend in its distribution upon what I may call the misconduct of the Local Authorities in failing to provide a sufficient Superannuation Fund, and I think it only reasonable that where these subventions are given the localities should assist in bearing the burdens.

(8.31.) MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I think we must congratulate ourselves upon the very able manner in which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton has laid this question before the House. I think he has given rise to a Debate of extreme interest and importance. As the right hon. Gentleman has well said the Metropolis stands in a different position to the other parts of the country, and the Metropolitan Members admit at once that the attitude they take up is because of that difference in the position of the Metropolis. There are facts connected with the control of the Metropolitan Police, which do not exist in other parts of the country, and we have to look at the proposals of the Government from that standpoint. Having listened to the speech of the Home Secretary, I must say I fail to see in what way the members of the Force will receive direct benefit from his proposal. I admit at once that there is a huge deficit in the Police Superannuation Fund, the amount being £145,000, or it is near enough to say £140,000. Now, that deficit at the present time comes out of the General Revenue. I want to know whether that deficit will be wiped away when this £150,000 is obtained. What I want to know is this. Supposing the £150,000 takes the place of the £145,000, where does the right hon. Gentleman get his money from to defray the cost of the extra 1,000 police he is going to appoint? Early this Session I asked the right hon. Gentleman whether it was true that an increase of the Police Force was taking place, and he answered that he was adding to the Force at the rate of 100 a month until the total of 1,000 had been reached, and he added, in answer to a further question which I put to him whether he was going to rely upon the present funds at the disposal of Scotland Yard, that it might be found necessary to make an appeal to this House for extra money. At that time we supposed that the House would have to be appealed to for further statutory powers. The present 9d. rate, I find, is almost entirely consumed by the present expenditure on the police, and I cannot see, throughout the Returns just issued, where the right hon. Gentleman gets the money to meet the cost of the extra 1,000 police. I quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton that there is little doubt the £150,000 is going to be used in meeting the demand necessitated by the appointment of 1,000 additional police. What position do we take up? We had hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would ask for the money by Bill in the ordinary way. He has not done so. We say distinctly that we are not prepared to see any additional burden put upon the back of the Metropolitan Members so long as we have not direct control of the police. Therefore, we are going to vote for the Government because we say that we are willing to take anything for the Metropolis we can get. We have no control over the Metropolitan Police. We have our opinions as to whether the force is managed economically; and it will be in the recollection of the House that my hon. Friend the Member for Hoxton laid the whole business plainly before the House last Session, and showed that the present state of the Metropolitan Force, financially, is very unfortunate indeed. We have the whole of the 9d. rate swallowed up; we have no control over the manner in which that rate is spent. By the Returns I find that provincial towns are much better placed than the Metropolis in respect of their police and the cost to the ratepayers. When you hear the Metropolitan Police talked about, you feel they are a force coming within the area of the London County Council; but the fact is, that within their jurisdiction are two municipal boroughs—West Ham and Croydon—one on the east and the other on the south. A great part of Surrey is policed by the London County Council and the Justices of the Peace under the Local Government Act of 1888; while there is a large section just bordering the London County Council which is under the control of the Metropolitan Police. Another matter of importance is, that we have to furnish men from the Metropolitan Police to do a large amount of public work, and, while I am aware that payment is made for those services, I am convinced that the allowances do not cover the extra cost which the Metropolis is put to with regard to the supply of police for public purposes. I quite agree that the Government must have at its service men for particular duties, in addition to the men required at Pembroke Docks and other places. The Government cannot get rid of the whole difficulty of the management and control of the police by simply granting this £150,000. We have two objects in view, the first of which is to see that the necessary funds shall be forthcoming to enable the police constables and the officers of the Metropolitan Police Force to be placed in a better position than at present for the performance of the duty they have to discharge. And here I wish it to be understood that we have no complaint to make against the endeavours of those who desire to put the force on such a substantial basis as we think they are entitled to. But, on the other hand, we say that so long as the Central Government make exceptions in the case of the Metropolitan Police, and say that they are not to have the same rights of citizenship as were similarly circumstanced in the large provincial towns, and that the ratepayers are not to have the same control over the police as is exercised elsewhere, because they are not to be trusted in the same way as other citizens, the responsibility of finding the necessary means for the maintenance of that force rests entirely with you, the Government. We say that the present 9d. rate is a heavy burden upon the inhabitants of the Metropolis, a burden too heavy for them to be called upon to bear, and we are determined not to allow any increase on that impost. It is for these reasons that we intend to vote with the Government, and we should do the same with regard to any other Government making a similar proposal with reference to this question.

*(8.17.) Sir R. LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.): It seems to me that the Metropolitan Members ought to take some notice of the challenge thrown down by the hon. Member and responded to in a very half-hearted manner by Members on the other side of the House, and particularly by the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. I trust that the ratepayers of the Metropolis, and those who are interested in the police administration of this great City, will take notice of the objection of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton to the proposals of Her Majesty's Government, the object of which is to put the position of the Metropolitan Police upon a more substantial basis. The right hon. Gentleman has asked what advantage the Members of that force will derive from those proposals, but it is abundantly apparent that those proposals will make the superannuation of the police a matter of right and no longer a matter of discretion; while, at the same time, they will relieve the Metropolitan Police Fund from the objection that the burden, as it exists at the present moment, is almost too heavy to be borne. The right hon. Member opposite took objection to the action of his Colleague the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby in having established the salaries of the Metropolitan Police on a somewhat lavish scale. ["No, no!"] At any rate, the hon. Gentleman said the Member for Derby had left his stamp on the police pensions of the Metropolis, and that they were on a somewhat lavish scale; but if the Committee were to follow the advice of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, they would leave this system of lavish expenditure, for which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby is responsible, to be met by the oppressed ratepayers of the Metropolis. It is a significant fact that when a Metropolitan Member rises on the other side of the House to address this Committee, he practically repudiates all the recommendations of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, and says he intends to vote on this question with Her Majesty's Government. So, I think, should all Metropolitan Members; and I hope that the electors of the Metropolis will take note of the fact.

(8.24.) Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.): Bearing in mind the consideration that the large proportion of the money intended to be used for the purpose now under discussion is to be taken from the extravagant duty to be laid upon Irish whisky, I think it the duty of the Irish Members to object to the financial proposition which is here involved. The system is an exceedingly bad one and most unjust to the next House of Commons.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not entitled to enter into a criticism of the financial propositions of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the question now before the House, which simply has regard to a proposal for superannuation allowances for the police of the Metropolis.

Colonel NOLAN: Of course, I bow to your ruling. And I would say that if you are to give a Local Authority the sum of £300,000, you ought not to tie the hands of that authority with respect to the purposes for which the money is to be applied. If you do that, you are simply giving the money with one hand and tying up the method of its expenditure with the other. And, if you give a sum like this to the County Councils of England, and tell them they are to spend it for certain specific purposes, no future House of Commons will be able to remedy whatever inconveniences may arise from your action, and hereafter the House of Commons will be in the absurd position of having to vote money to these bodies, who will not be able to apply it for the purposes they may desire, but will be compelled to devote it for the purposes set forth by a Parliament elected in 1886. Now, Sir, the sum of money which is to be derived from the increased duty on Irish whisky——

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member is disregarding my ruling.

Colonel NOLAN: I am sorry you find it necessary to stop me, but probably I may be enabled in some later phase of the question to make the observations I desire to put before the Committee. I must, however, say that I think the proposed distribution of the money is most unfair, and that the present proposal will form an exceedingly bad precedent. At any rate, I regard it as a most dangerous innovation as far as Ireland is concerned, and I cannot help regarding the Bill with extreme suspicion. I hope the Committee will reject this clause, and that, if they do not, certain portions of the Bill will receive the most thorough examination, because I believe when the measure is thoroughly examined it will be found to be a Bill for the bribing of electors and a Bill to tie the hands of County Councils in the disposal of the funds. (8.31.)

(9.1.) Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

(9.3.) MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg): It would be out of order to discuss the way in which this money has been provided. The question is, what we are to do with the money that has been found for us. I object, in common with my right hon. Friend (Mr. H. H. Fowler), who spoke with such force and clearness a short time ago, to such application of the funds as is proposed in the clause now under consideration. I object very strongly to the system under which you provide for local wants by means of Imperial taxation. I believe it is a mode of doing business which leads to very great and grave scandals, and which is opposed to every sound principle. I do not hesitate to say that one reason I have for objecting to this proposal is that if you once give for the purpose and in the form mentioned in the clause, it would be very difficult, if not almost unjust, to withdraw, and, inasmuch as the Act on which this is founded has been passed, and as this Act will be passed, in spite of anything that can be said or done, by what I may almost call main force, it will be exactly on a level with several other enactments of this Parliament, which another Parliament will feel itself quite at liberty calmly to repeal. If once the money is partly expended, it will be very difficult to stop its further expenditure. Another objection to the sub-section is that it is another instance of a distinction drawn between the three Kingdoms with regard to the application of Imperial funds. This, again, I take to be an exceedingly dangerous and obnoxious principle. The Bill proposes to devote the money in England to superannuation, to the extinction of licences, and to some other purposes. In Scotland it is to go towards police superannuation, the extinction of licences, and educational purposes; whilst in Ireland it will go towards the extinction of licences and educational purposes. I apprehend that, with regard to this Imperial taxation, the principle to be applied to the one nation ought to be applied to the other.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): In Ireland there is a Superannuation Fund.

MR. WADDY: So have we a Superannuation Fund.

*MR. GOSCHEN: Not an Imperial Fund.

MR. WADDY: I am quite prepared to say that I intend subsequently to propose that the whole of the sum should be taken for education. That will get rid entirely of the difficulty. I object most strongly to the present proposal, because it will render more difficult the revision or repeal of this and many other Statutes passed, as we think, unfairly, by a House of Commons which does not represent the opinion of the country.

*(9.11.) MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.): I am not at present very much concerned with the elaborate figures brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). They show that there has been considerable mismanagement with reference to the Superannuation Fund of the police; but if they go to prove anything, I think they go to prove the necessity of the proposals of the Government with reference to this matter. I do not know what stronger arguments could have been adduced in support of the re-consideration of the superannuation arrangements. I hope this money will be distributed fairly with reference to those boroughs which have made provision for the superannuation of their police, and that an attempt will be made to place the superannuation of the police in the other boroughs and counties and in the Metropolis on a satisfactory footing. I believe the police discharge their very necessary duties with great forbearance, and to the great satisfaction of the public. There may be individual cases in which we have had to complain

of the police; but, on the whole, I believe there is a general feeling of satisfaction with the way in which the police—the Metropolitan and City Police especially—perform their duties. I think they have a real grievance in connection with their Superannuation Funds, and I would advocate a more generous treatment of our police than they have hitherto experienced, not only in connection with their superannuation but also their pay. I cannot help thinking they have grievances in connection with the Superannuation Fund, and I believe this grant in aid of the Superannuation Fund of the Metropolitan Police will enable the superannuation of the Metropolitan Police especially to be placed on a satisfactory footing. If this were done, I believe it would render them a more contented and useful force, and that it would receive the support of the public. I am told the money would go not to benefit the police, but to relieve the ratepayers. That is one way of putting the matter, but, if so, I do not object, for unless this subvention be granted to the Superannuation Fund of the Metropolitan Police, there will be an appeal to Parliament to increase the police rate throughout London, not only for superannuation, but also in order to provide the additional number of police which it has been resolved to add to the Metropolitan Police Force. In any case, this grant will lighten the burdens of the ratepayers of London. I am not terrified by the suggestion that a large portion of the fund will go to the relief of the ratepayers of London. There is no class of persons in this country who are more entitled to consideration in connection with the adjustment of local burdens than the ratepayers of London. The rates of London are very heavy indeed, amounting in some cases to as much as 6s. in the £1; while in a district just outside London, but within the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Police, they are from 10s. to 11s. in the £1. Under these circumstances, I do not think there need be, on the part of the Metropolitan Members, any great anxiety with reference to a proposal which will very considerably relieve the already over-burdened ratepayers of London. The right hon. Gentleman has expressed very great anxiety with reference to the subvention of rates. I think he rather exaggerates the matter. It has become a sort of text for argument to talk about the impolicy and impropriety of subventions and to jump at the conclusion that subventions in aid of the rates are always wrong. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman it would be much more satisfactory if there could be a re-adjustment as between local rating and Imperial taxation; but until that happy time arrives, I am not terrified at the grants made from time to time in relief of local taxation. I believe that on a re-adjustment it would be found that local taxation has not received more than it would have received if it had had allotted to it those resources which local taxation has a right to look forward to. With reference to the Metropolitan Police, it must be borne in mind that this force discharges duties that are not peculiar to the Metropolis. The London Police discharge many duties which entitle them to consideration from the Imperial Authorities and Imperial Exchequer. They are under the control of, and responsible to, this House. Surely, therefore, it is quite within the province of this House out of Imperial resources to provide for reasonable requirements of the police in connection with their superannuation. I am here as a London Member to look at this matter in the interest of the people of London. I make this frank and candid confession to the House. I believe the people of London will be very well satisfied with the proposal of the Government to assist the Superannuation Fund of the Metropolitan Police, and I do not think the people of other parts of the country need display any great opposition to it when they consider the Imperial character of the Metropolitan Police and the duties they discharge in the capital of the Empire. It may not be altogether satisfactory to some men who, like myself, are Radicals and Party men, to have to express satisfaction at any proposal of a Conservative Government; but justice and fairness compel me to support the present proposal, and I believe that I and others will succeed in inducing the rest of the Liberal Members for London to support this proposition.

*(9.25.) SIR W. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.): I was delighted to hear the speech of the hon. Member (Mr. T. H.

Bolton), because it shows that he, at any rate, considers this question to be far above Party. I venture to say that these proposals are reasonable and just. The police have been promised for many years that they should have a Superannuation Bill. I do not wish to say anything that may offend right hon. Gentlemen opposite; but I may say they that had an opportunity, and they state that they did bring forward certain Bills with regard to the police; but I ask the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) whether, with any heart and with any soul, they ever proposed to press the Bills through the House of Commons. It has been said their Bills met with opposition from Members who now sit upon the Government side of the House. The right hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well that we opposed those Bills because we believed that a force which was of universal benefit to the whole country should be supported, at any rate to a considerable extent, with regard to its superannuation by Imperial funds. I have had very considerable experience of police matters, as the Chairman for many years of Police Committees, and I assert that one of the greatest difficulties which has always arisen with regard to the superannuation of the police is that there is no definite and guiding principle upon which the fund should be conducted. When the Act which enabled us to have a Superannuation Fund was passed, it was stated that only in case of necessity the rates of the country should be called upon to pay towards the fund. Inasmuch as there were certain amounts which were paid annually into the fund, it was considered for many years that there would be no call upon the rates, but when the call did begin to be made on the rates it was made exceedingly heavily, and those counties which had not prepared for that day found out to their cost they had to come on the rates to a very large extent. We find that three things have happened. Some counties have been wise and prudent enough to provide out of the rates from the first a certain amount of money to be added to the 2½ per cent. which the police contributed, and to the other funds the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton enumerated; there were other counties which did not do that, but which contributed a small amount from the rates, and then, when the time of pressure came, continually had to pay out small amounts; and there were other counties which provided nothing at all, and which eventually found the fund was entirely exhausted. The Home Secretary has said that there were certain boroughs which did nothing but take the money the police subscribed, and give no pensions at all. The police, therefore, have in some cases, just cause of complaint. I believe that in several counties there were vast differences of opinion as to what the superannuation should be, and what I have asked for years past is that the Government should bring in a Bill which should contribute a fair quota towards the Superannuation Fund, and lay down, within certain limits, what the superannuation should be. You cannot, in this matter of superannuation, treat the London police like ordinary rural police. There must be elasticity in superannuation. A man who is liable to be knocked about at night is in a totally different position from the man who has practically only routine work to do from one year's end to the other. The man in the country can go on for very many years, whereas in London a man will probably be worked out in 25 years. There must be elasticity of treatment between a maximum and a minimum pension. I have seen and known cases in the country where a man has been able to carry on business and do hard work, and earn considerable sums of money, while very many of the ratepayers who were paying for his superannuation were in straitened circumstances. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. H. H. Fowler) has said that he is against Imperial funds being devoted to this purpose; but we have heard from several hon. Members opposite representing London constituencies that they do not object to a contribution from Imperial funds. The hon. Member for St. Pancras and the hon. Member for Finsbury say how severely the Metropolitan ratepayers are pressed, and these hon. Members expressed an opinion that the Government proposal is just and fair.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, East): I did not say that; I simply accepted the proposal, seeing that we are not allowed to have control of the police.

SIR W. BARTTELOT: That is a totally different question. I understood the hon. Gentleman to say that the ratepayers of London ought to have something from Imperial funds, and, therefore, he supported this proposal. I daresay the hon. Member and his friends would like to have control of the police, but that is a question we have not to discuss now, and I will only say there are two sides to that question, and the hon. Member will find, when it comes on for discussion, that such a proposition will not be easily carried. The other night, on the Tithes Bill, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. H. H. Fowler) expressed sympathy with the agricultural interest; but now I do not think he gives the consideration to that interest it ought to receive. I think that the proposal of the Government is one which will commend itself to the whole country. I regret that the right hon. Gentleman is not able to lay on the Table the Bill with regard to superannuation, because if we had that Bill the whole of this discussion would probably be considered out of order. I hope that the Government will pass that Bill in the interests of the police, a body of men whose interests well deserve consideration from the House.

(9.37.) MR. ROWNTREE (Scarborough): The hon. Baronet began by assuring the House that the Government proposal is just and reasonable, but he concluded with a hope that that proposal will be produced. I should have thought it would have been more prudent to reserve opinion until the proposal is before us. Surely it is most inexpedient and a most undesirable policy that we should be called upon to vote the taxation of our constituents while being utterly unable to tell them what the adjustment of that taxation will be. I confess, although I listened carefully to the statement from the right hon Gentleman opposite, I could not tell my constituents what the probable effect of this Bill would be upon them. But we have had a very remarkable light thrown upon the hopes of hon. Members by the speeches delivered by the hon. Baronet (Sir Walter Barttelot), and by some of our Radical colleagues on this side. Most ingenious if not convincing statements have been made. The hon. Baronet says the agricultural interest is extremely depressed, and this we all acknowledge and deplore. But upon that the hon. Member founds a claim for additional taxation for the relief of the counties. But, I suppose, in every constituency there are industries depressed equally with the agricultural interest, and ratepayers have a hard struggle for existence. Yet we are apparently to vote a large sum from Imperial taxation, which is welcomed by the Representatives of the agricultural interest and by Metropolitan Members as being a relief to them provided by other taxpayers whose interests are of less importance. This proposal is, that of £300,000 to be raised by taxation of all the population, half is to go to the relief of the rates of London —that is, to the relief of 5,000,000 of ratepayers, whose proper share would be a fifth. We are told it is right and proper to do this, and that this Committee is the Watch Committee of London, but I think it is the worst Watch Committee that could be devised. It has been frankly stated that there is a great deal of waste in the management of the police, and that this is a device for increasing the number of police in the Metropolis; but the hon. Members representing London constituencies welcome it because at present they have no control over the police. Our people are to pay for their own police and for a large share of the cost of the London police, though the management is wasteful and non-effective. These speeches ought to have weight with borough Members. When the information showing the new departure in this matter is really before us, I believe it will be seen that the boroughs of England are paying a far greater proportion, and are going to be called upon to pay a far greater proportion, than is at all fair or just to the taxpayers in those boroughs. I do think that in common justice we ought to be in a position to put clearly before our constituents information that would set this matter at rest. If we are wrong the sooner our errors are proved the better for us all, but at present all the evidence goes to show that money will be raised by fresh taxation in boroughs, to be expended in the counties and in the Metropolis. I shall with great pleasure follow my right hon. Friend into the Lobby, as a protest against the injustice which will be imposed on borough populations by these proposals.

(9.45.) MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): The main interest of Scotland is in the next clause, but I should be sorry that hon. Members should at this stage be under any false impression as to the view we take on the question of police superannuation, and the sources from which it should be drawn. I am very much in favour of the superannuation of the police; but I am not more in favour of that than I am in favour of the superannuation of workmen, who have to pay for the superannuation of the police. As a matter of abstract justice, it is as reasonable and quite as necessary that the community from whose pockets the funds are drawn should have a superannuation scheme. The only point in which the police differ from other people is in cases where they are injured in the execution of their duty. But, after allowing for that single concession, there is no principle on which the superannuation of the police can be justified any more than the superannuation of other workers My objection depends more on the sources from which the money is to come. The proposal of the Government is to take money from the Imperial Exchequer in aid of local rates. Now a more pernicious principle than that cannot possibly be devised. In the first place, it is inequitable and unjust.

THE CHAIRMAN: The principle of the Bill cannot be discussed now.

*(9.47.) CAPTAIN VERNEY (Bucks, N.): One thing has been said by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. H. H. Fowler) and others which is based upon an error. He referred to the failure of establishing a Superannuation Fund as a failure of duty. Now, I submit to the Committee that this is not the result of a failure of duty, but that it has been done with intention and design. I do not want to trouble the Committee with autobiographical details, but I may mention that, when some 14 years ago I became Chairman of Anglesey Quarter Sessions, there was a fund for the superannuation of the police. We were always increasing that fund; we never drew anything but the interest; and if the interest was not enough, it was made up from the rates; but the fund itself kept on increasing. The Magistrates saw that the fund, which kept on increasing, would before long become self-supporting, and there would be no necessity to come upon the rates at all. Thus there would be no check on the pensions of the police. They, therefore, thought it better to draw on the capital of the fund, so that the ratepayers might always have the matter before them, when the fund was exhausted, and they would have to come upon the rates. Then the question arose as to the legality of coming entirely upon the rates, and upon this we took legal opinions, which were about equally balanced. We found that many counties considered it legal, and acted upon that view, and others considered it illegal, and only used the interest of the sum. Well, for the reason that we wished to keep the matter constantly before the ratepayers, we decided to draw on the capital and have as small a fund in hand as possible. That was done intentionally and of design, and I submit that we ought not to be accused of a failure of duty. We conscientiously believed it to be our duty to the ratepayers that they might have the question of pensions always clearly before them.

(9.50.) SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): My right hon. Friend has dealt with this subject in such a manner that I have very little to add to what he has said. I shall not, I think, be accused of being indifferent to the question of the superannuation of the police. During the time I was in office there was hardly any other subject that more engaged my attention. There is, I think, a great deal of delusion on this subject from which the hon. Baronet the Member for Sussex (Sir W. Barttelot) is not altogether free. The hon. Member was very eloquent and patriotic in praise and in sympathy for the police. Well, we all feel with him in that; but I am bound to say that, whatever this Bill is going to do for the ratepayers, it is going to do uncommonly little for the police. The London Police will get nothing they do not get at present. There is provision in London for the superannuation of the police, and the Government, so far as I know, do not propose to alter that provision. We are discussing this matter at great disadvantage, because we have voted the money, and do not know how it is going to be used. But it is becoming the practice of the Government to get money from Parliament and to decline to say how it is to be expended. It is a new policy, and contrary to all financial principles which have governed the House of Commons hitherto. The sound principle is, before you demand the money, to say what you are going to do with it. From what has been said, I assume that the system of superannuation in the Metropolis is to be maintained. The various Superannuation Bills have gone very much on the principle of applying to the other parts of the country the Metropolitan system. Therefore, this Bill will not give any boon to the Metropolitan Police. The Metropolitan Members take a peculiar view of the subject. I do not complain of any Member trying to get hold of a sum of money for his constituents. I would certainly do it for mine. I am afraid, however, the Metropolitan Members do not understand their own position. Here we have £150,000 to be appropriated; but is it to go to a fund over which the Metropolitan Members will have any control? Not at all. I could understand their voting the money if it were going in relief of their rates; but it is not. The Metropolitan Police rate is fixed at 9d., and the ratepayers will not pay a farthing less if this £150,000 be voted. If this £150,000, on the other hand, went to the County Councils, the Metropolis would get the benefit of the money, and yet you are going to vote against a Motion which would give £150,000 to the County Councils, in order that it may be placed at the disposal of the Home Secretary for the Police Fund. A more extraordinany policy from hon. Members who claim to have control of their own police I cannot conceive. They are going to vote for £150,000 being placed to the credit of a fund over which they will have no control, and from which the rates will receive no relief. Hon. Members are judges of their own interests, but, so far as I can understand, it is absolutely contrary to all principles they have ever professed, and to the interest of their constituents in the rates. The money will go to—I will not say it is not a useful object—the assistance of the Police Fund, but it will not assist the rates. I am not speaking in disparagement of the Police Fund; but from the point of view of the ratepayers I am safe in saying that this provision in the Bill will do nothing for the London policeman and nothing for the London ratepayer. That cannot be denied. What, then, is it going to do in the rest of the country? It appears there are some parts of the country that have not made the provision they ought to have made for the superannuation of the police. But the Home Secretary is going to treat the just and the unjust alike, and all districts, whether they have or have not made proper provision for the superannuation of the police, are equally to have a grant out of the Imperial Fund. Here, again, we are in the dark. Of the Metropolitan Police I can speak with confidence. I know what their position is, and, as I understand the Home Secretary, their position will remain practically the same.

MR. MATTHEWS: The right hon. Gentleman must not assume that.

SIR W. HARCOURT: We are entitled to an opinion, at least; and if the Metropolitan Police are to be placed on a different footing in regard to superannuation, why do not the Government tell the Committee what their proposals are? The measure must not go to the country under false pretences. It will not confer on the ratepayers of London any boon at all—it will not relieve the rates a single farthing. I will ask the Government if, when this £120,000 is contributed, there is any intention to lower the 9d. police rate? I should think there will be no diminution of the rate. I appeal again to the Secretary of State if that is his intention. If there is to be no reduction, then I repeat that the grant will be no relief to the London ratepayer. In my opinion, the House will be merely voting the money as an additional subsidy to the general rate. As the Committee do not know what provision is to be made for the police, we cannot discuss the matter; but the President of the Local Government Board, when he follows me, will be in the secret of the Bill which the Government keep up their sleeves. I still assert that the boon is not that which it is represented to be; it is simply an addition to the subsidy to the general rates. In not being able to discuss this matter on equal terms with the Government, we are not placed in a fair position. In my opinion, instead of appropriating this money as the Government propose, it had better be given to the general rates, and handed over to the body who have control over those rates. I have the interest of the police at heart as much as anybody in this House; but I do not think that this proposal is wise in itself, or that it constitutes the best way of dealing with the money. If the grant is to be made, let the County Councils deal with it.

*(10.8.) MR. RITCHIE: I make no complaint of the general tone of the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman, but I venture to say that no one who heard the earlier remarks of the right hon. Gentleman would have supposed that he was not in the secret of the Government's proposals. The right hon. Gentleman laid down two propositions with great confidence and without fear of contradiction—first, that nothing would be done for the London Police; and second, that nothing would be done for the London ratepaper. I cannot quite understand how he was able to make such a definite and distinct assertion unless he had the knowledge, which he said was necessary to enable one to come to a right conclusion. Now, as to his assertion that nothing is to be done for the police as regards superannuation, I would point out that Clause 4 deals much more largely with the question of police; and before the Committee come to that clause it will be entitled to know the proposals of the Government in regard to the allocation of the money. The right hon. Gentleman must not jump too hastily at the conclusion that nothing is to be done for the London Police in the way of superannuation. Then, as to the London rates the right hon. Gentleman must be aware that the superannuation of the police, even under the existing system, was only attained by making heavy drafts upon the ordinary police rate. There was no Superannuation Fund in London available for superannuation. This state of things could not go on for ever. There must come a time when a demand would have to be made on the London ratepayers for an adequate provision, and the provisions which the Government now propose will prevent the necessity for such a demand, besides putting the superannuation of the Metropolitan Police on a sound and satisfactory footing. The

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right hon. Gentleman asked why the money was not given to the County Councils as a subsidy in aid of the rates, but that was not the way in which the right hon. Gentleman proceeded in connection with superannuation. In his Bills the right hon. Gentleman proposed to entail upon the Local Authority heavy obligations with reference to superannuation. The Government asserted that the County Councils throughout the country were led to expect that they would have a certain sum of money given to them in aid of their local rates. That sum was considerably reduced in consequence of a certain Bill, which provided for raising the funds, not being passed. Although the Government did not assent to the proposition which was made at the time that they were responsible for finding the money which the County Councils were naturally led to expect, yet they did recognise the fact that county finance was not upon that basis which they led the County Councils to expect at the time the Local Government Act was passed. The Government now find that money for the County Councils, and they think they are justified in binding the County Councils to apply it towards the superannuation of the police. The right hon. Member for Wolverhampton was rather angry with the London Members for being prepared to accept that boon. The right hon. Gentleman said he was angry——

SIR W. HARCOURT: Not angry, but astonished.

*MR. RITCHIE: Well, then, the right hon. Gentleman said he was astonished at Metropolitan Members allowing that money to go to a fund over which they have no control. Are we to understand that the right hon. Gentleman has receded from the position which it is well known he took up at one time, that the control of the London Police ought to be retained in the Home Office? I am very much surprised that the right hon. Gentleman should appeal to the London Members to reject this boon, because the police are not under the control of the County Council. The Government believe the proposals they are making are necessary if the Superannuation Funds of the police in London and the country are to be put on a satisfactory basis. The right hon. Gentleman passed some rather severe strictures upon the Local Government Board for not having presented to Parliament a Paper giving details of the amounts which have been allocated and contributed to County Councils and boroughs out of the funds appropriated to them. The preparation of the figures required a considerable amount of time, and they have only been received by the Local Government Board from the Inland Revenue a few days ago. Certainly there has been no unnecessary delay at the Local Government Board, and I have no reason to believe that due diligence has not been used on the part of the Inland Revenue. I believe we shall be in a position within the next few days to lay the Paper on the Table of the House. I believe I have shown that the right hon. Gentleman is quite mistaken in saying that our proposal in reference to London will give no relief to the rates or that it will not prove beneficial to the police.

*(10.23.) MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I cannot agree that the Bill is required to put the Superannuation Fund on a proper footing so far as the Metropolis is concerned, although it may be required for that purpose in other parts of the country. I rise, however, to answer the question raised by my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby, as to why the Metropolitan Liberal Members are about to vote against the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton. We believe that those who control and manage the force should be those who pay it. When you have placed the Metropolitan Police under the control of the ratepayers of the Metropolis, when it is in their power to raise or to refuse to raise a rate that may be required, then we will not come to this House for grants for the police. But this House claims—and has maintained its claim—that the police of the Metropolis shall be managed by the House, and, consequently, the House should be obliged to pay for it. The House has claimed and maintained a right to impose a rate on the London people for the purpose. By Act of Parliament it imposes a unnecessary police rate, and, after the remarks of the Home Secretary, I venture to say that that 9d. will soon be increased to 10d., unless this offer of the Government is accepted. I prophesied that this would be the case two years ago if we continued the present system, and my words have been verified. The Government are not acting in a straight way in the manner they are now seeking to avoid that necessity. I think the Metropolitan police rate is already ridiculously high; it is high in every way, and it is so because the Government and the Home Secretary insist on levying the rate and administering the proceeds of it. When the rate is administered by the people who have to levy and pay it, depend upon it you will not only get rid of all the unpleasant friction which now arises between the police and the people of the Metropolis, but you will also avoid that continually increasing increase of expenditure. So long as we have no share in the management or control of the police I say that a 9d. rate is too large a police rate to levy, and I can only say, in conclusion, that there is no possible solution of this question than by proving to the House that it must pay for its own experiments. We are determined that so long as this House claims to manage the police so long shall the constituents of this House contribute towards the expense.

*(10.28.) MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I think we are carrying on this discussion under most inconvenient circumstances. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, in his forcible speech, made a double protest. He condemned the action of the Government in not giving us the Returns necessary to enable us to judge the application of this money, and he protested also against the Superannuation Bill not being in our hands. Now, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board has offered some apology for the non-appearance of the Returns. But I do submit that we are not in a position to discuss this matter, unless we are able to understand the financial effect of the proposal, so far as our constituencies are concerned. That is a position in which no Member of the House should be placed. Why not postpone this matter, so that we may judge. With regard to the superannuation measure, the Chancellor of the Exchequer threw across the Table of the House the remark to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolver-

hampton "You will find that principle in the Bill." It is all very well to tell us that the principle is in the Bill, but we want to find the words in which it is clothed. The Bill, from what has fallen from the Home Secretary, will probably shów that there is room for criticism whenever it reaches our hands. It is perfectly impossible to discuss adequately this matter without both the Returns and the Bill in our hands I am quite aware that the Chief Secretary asks us to vote Bills without giving us the evidence on which he founds those Bills, and I am sorry to say that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) is in this matter somewhat imbued with the same spirit. I feel entirely justified in making the Motion with which I am about to conclude. I am perfectly aware that it may be called obstruction, but I am willing to take all the responsibility attaching to it. For the reasons I have given, Mr. Courtney, I beg to move that you now report Progress.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think I am justified in refusing to put that Motion.

(11.17.) MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I think the House is indebted to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby for placing the issue clearly before the Committee. As I understand, the Amendment proposed by my right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton really only offers us a choice of evils, and, of the two, I have no hesitation in accepting my right hon. Friend's. I do not think it has been clearly brought to the attention of the Committee that in the Bill, as drawn, the County Council is the residuary legatee of this fund. You have first the superannuation of police to provide for, and next the extinction of licences in England. The 1st sub-section says the residue is to be given to the County Council. If you get rid of one or the other of these two primary purposes, then the whole of the residue goes to the County Council, and I am justified in saying that the London County Council will be the residuary legatee of this fund under the Bill. Under the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, the whole of the residue would go to the local Representatives of the people, to be managed by them for local purposes. What do the Government propose to do with it under Sub-section 1? They do not in the least tell us. They refer us to a Bill which, so far as we are concerned, is not yet in existence. The right hon. Gentleman a few minutes ago, in defending his position, referred us to Clause 4 as affording a complete statement of what is going to be done under this Superannuation Bill. But there is not one single word in Clause 4 which is not in Clause 1, except one, that the rate of the Metropolis is distinctly defined in Clause 4, and it is not in Clause 1. If we are entitled to know under Clause 4 what the Government are going to do, we are equally entitled to know what they are going to do under Clause 1 in respect to this specific grant now being made, according to the proposal of Her Majesty's Government. I cannot compare the demand made by the Government on the Committee to anything else than what the Americans call "a blind boom," which means that people trust their money to a person without knowing how he is going to use it. It is a "blind boom" the right hon. Gentleman is now asking us to sanction. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton offers us the alternative to leave the money to the County Councils, to make use of it for local purposes. I believe my right hon. Friend objects as strongly as I do to the whole policy upon which the clause is founded, but as between the two evils, I have no hesitation in supporting the alternative proposed by my right hon. Friend, and I shall vote in support of the Amendment.

*(10.37.) MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal green, S.W.): Sir, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby dealt somewhat severely with the London Members, and I wish to say a few words in their justification. Now, with the principles laid down by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton I very largely agree and sympathise. But when the right hon. Gentleman complains that the Metropolis is receiving a larger share of this money than that to which it is entitled, he can hardly expect us to follow him. The Government, upon whom rests the responsibility of reconciling opposite and divergent interests, offers to the Metropolis a large subvention, and it is hardly reasonable to

expect the Metropolitan Members to refuse it. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby raised an issue which was not quite fair. He said that the issue presented to the Metropolitan Members was whether the £150,000 should be paid over to the Receiver of the Metropolitan Police or to the London County Council. That is not at all the issue. The £150,000 is allocated to London for a particular purpose—the superannuation of the police—and there is no reason to suppose that if, as my hon. and learned Friend suggests, the London County Council were to become the residuary legatee, the Government would give the Metropolis so large a share. One word with regard to the ridicule which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby tried to throw upon the London Members. We may be selfish, but we are not so short-sighted, as the right hon. Gentleman represents. What is the case? £150,000 is at present paid over to the Metropolitan Police Superannuation Fund annually out of the general Police Fund. In future that £150,000 is otherwise provided for. It is obvious that one of two parties must receive an advantage by the Police Fund being discharged from that liability—either the ratepayers or the police. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby that the ratepayers are not likely to receive any benefit. I think that the President of the Local Government Board confirms my impression that the Metropolitan police rate will not be reduced. But I shall vote for this proposal, because it is inevitable that the Metropolitan Police must receive large advantages out of this £150,000. I am one of those who believe that the position of the rank and file of the police is unsatisfactory, and that their emoluments and pensions are not such as they have a right to ask. They compare unfavourably with the City Police in that respect. There is already rising in the ranks of the Metropolitan Force an agitation for an improvement in their position, and the Government cannot resist that agitation. I have sometimes been constrained to speak in terms of reprobation of the Authorities of Scotland Yard, but I have always borne my humble tribute to the merits of the rank and file of the Police Force, and I shall be glad if the vote which we give to-night results in placing at the disposal of the Receiver of the Metropolitan Police funds, out of which he will have the means of satisfying the reasonable demands of the Force.

(10.44.) MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): I would point out that though the Metropolitan Members are very important in this case they represent only one-fifth of the population, and surely those who live in other parts of the country should have an opportunity of stating their case. I think it is a miserable matter upon which the Committee of the House of Commons is engaged at the present moment. If a Peabody or a Carnegie had left a sum of money in the hands of the Government there could not have been a greater scramble for it than there is for a share of this fund. In my opinion, the Chancellor of the Exchequer is extending a system which is pernicious in the last degree. We have Bills before us affecting millions of people, yet the precious time of the House is wasted in a scramble for a few hundred thousand pounds among gentlemen representing the Metropolis and the provinces. If our system of taxation were fair and equal it would only be the difference between taking the money out of the right-hand pocket instead of the left. We know the anxiety there is to transfer money from the Imperial Exchequer to purposes of a local character, and, at the same time, we know that the poorer classes pay a very much larger sum to the Imperial Exchequer than is allowed out of it for local purposes. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Sussex (Sir W. Barttelot) has pointed to the case of the agricultural labourer, but he has not stated how the agricultural labourer would be benefited by the allocation of this £300,000; and, in point of fact, the agricultural labourer will be as heavily burdened when this amount is allocated for the purposes proposed as he is at the present moment. After all, it is in reality a mere will-o'-the-wisp that we are now pursuing, and I, for one, must enter my strong protest against the policy which is now being pursued by Her Majesty's Government—the policy of subvention which is so constantly resorted to by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. On one other point, which is involved in the consideration of this question, I desire to say that we ought not to allow the Government to interfere in any way with the local control over the police of this country; and, if it were only on this ground, I think we ought to draw the line, and protest against this system of Government subvention for local purposes.

(10.50.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 249; Noes 169.—(Div. List, No. 127.)

(11.5.) MR. A. ACLAND (York, W.R., Rotherham): I beg to move the following Amendment:—Clause 1, page 1, line 16, after "mentioned," insert—

"(ii.) The sum of £350,000 shall be applied in England for the purposes of agricultural, commercial, and technical instruction, as defined in Clause 8 of 'The Technical Instruction Act, 1889,' and in Wales either for the said purposes or for the purposes defined in Clause 17 of 'The Welsh Intermediate Education Act, 1889.'"

We have now reached the sub-section of the Bill round which the principal controversy rages. I am glad that your ruling, Sir, permits us to offer an alternative to the proposition which we call the compensation or endowment of publicans. It may be said that the Instruction which I put down on this subject was obstructive, but I can only say that I had no obstructive intention. I put down the Instruction simply to give the House the choice whether it would give this large sum of money to assist education, which we all believe in, or to assist the publicans, an object which a great many of us do not believe in. Under this Bill we find, as usual, that our friends in Scotland and in Ireland are going to get assistance for education, but not a word is said about it for England. I am not going to make a long educational speech, but I should like to say that an opportunity has now arisen for assisting technical education, in a secondary sense, in a way which has not offered itself for many years. Last year the Government gave us a Technical Instruction Bill, and a Revised Code this year, but unless more is done than has been at present to help intermediate education, a large portion of the money spent on education will have been wasted, and the Technical Education Act of last Session will remain, what, unfortunately, it is at present throughout most of the country, a dead letter. If the Government could see their way—and they would receive every help from this part of the House—to stimulating local contributions under the Technical Education Act, by Imperial contributions, they would soon find a network of technical and secondary schools rising up throughout the country that would do credit to England, and soon put us on a level with other countries. I suppose I shall be asked "Do the County Councils want this money for the compensation of publicans?" and I affirm, without any doubt, that if the County Councils were consulted at this moment, they would prefer to have the money for education rather than have it for the endowment of publicans. I think that one of the blots in the Bill, and in this clause especially, is that the County Councils have never been consulted in this matter. This was never mentioned in the Queen's Speech. The County Councils, which met in May, had no opportunity of discussing the subject, and many of them will not meet again until August, when, I suppose, the Government will have passed the Bill into law. I think that many of the County Councils—I can speak for that to which I belong—will refuse to use this money at all, and I hope we shall find the whole of Wales and the whole of Scotland, as well as the whole of the North of England, refusing to touch this money for the purpose set down in the Bill. But offer it for education, and every County Council in the whole of Great Britain will instantly be willing and glad to help forward education—agricultural, commercial, technical, intermediate—for the benefit of the inhabitants of every county and every town. That is the proposition which I venture to lay before the Committee; that, I say, would most certainly be the verdict on their own proceedings; but the Government have sprung upon us this proposal. They have not consulted the County Councils, and they have laid at their door a duty that they do not want to discharge. I think very often *Punch* hits off the feeling of this country in matters of this kind very well. Recently it depicted the President of the Local Government Board with the infant publican in his arms and with the bottle of compensation to feed him, and the right hon. Gentleman is supposed to say, "Having brought the infant up, I am going to drop him in somebody's door," and he drops him in the doorway of the County Councils. Well, many of the County Councils will refuse to let him come inside the door. I may be told that this sum is too small to be of use for technical or intermediate education in this country; but I will endeavour to show, from the way we are working the Technical Education Act in Wales, that that is not the case. The Welsh Act may be called a small thing. It may give power to raise a ½d. rate, but I do not hesitate to say, from what I have seen during the past six months, that in a year or two in Wales we shall have a system of secondary education which will set an example to England which she will desire to follow. I have the honour to be the Chairman of one of the County Committees, appointed under this Act, partly by the County Council and partly by the Government, and I am, therefore, familiar with the systematic, thorough, and genuine way in which these Committees are getting to work. What is happening there shows the stimulus which a Government grant gives in these matters, and I say that the Government might easily, in a very few clauses, draft a scheme for the employment in England of the money dealt with in the Bill on some such operations as are now being carried out in Wales. That would be infinitely better than spending the money in raising the price of public houses. The hon. Member for the Bordesley Division (Mr. Jesse Collings), and other hon. Members, ask whether something cannot be done for agricultural education. I quite admit that something ought to be done. When it is known what is being done in countries like Denmark and Switzerland for agricultural education, England ought to feel ashamed of herself, and here is her opportunity of freeing herself from the reproach. If hon. Members press their principles this money might be the nucleus of a good system of agricultural and commercial education, and obviate the necessity our farmers and tradesmen are under of sending their children, for certain kinds of instruction, to wretched private adventure schools. To devote it to this use would be far wiser than to adopt the proposal of the Government, which will cause the maximum of friction with the minimum of good. I shall be asked why I refer to the alternative of the Government. I do so first because I consider that alternative a bad one. We are justified in calling it a scheme of compensation on a basis to be fixed by the publicans themselves. If it be not a scheme for the benefit of the publicans, why do we get letters of this sort, of which I have had several?

> "Dear Sir,—As one of your constituents, having a pecuniary interest in the brewing and licensing trade, may I ask you to give your support to the Customs and Excise Duties Bill?"

Having got your surplus out of drink, you say you are bound to spend some of it on those who sell drink. That may take in some people in the country, but I do not think it takes in anybody here. We know perfectly well that our taxes are not ear-marked in that way, and that the idea that the money must be spent on drink is simply a fraudulent and ludicrous assumption. As I have already pointed out, you will be involved in an endless muddle if you carry this proposal through. I believe that many of the County Councils will refuse to touch this money. You will then have one part of the country dealing with the question in the manner proposed, and the other parts withholding themselves from the "unclean thing" altogether. I believe my alternative to be one which supplies a genuine and real need to the country. We ask you to give to our young people in the middle classes, and the pick of the artisan class, who are now receiving no training, good technical and modern instruction of a kind very different from that which is offered in many of our old grammar schools at the present time. We know just as well as Members opposite what are the evils and miseries which result from the drink traffic, and we offer alternatives of this kind, not because this happens to be their scheme, but because we believe it to be a vicious scheme, and one which will not remedy the evil against which it is directed. I venture to say there will not be a murmur from any Town Council in any part of Great Britain if my proposal be carried. But I suppose it will not be carried. You are going to force this sub-section through against the will of large masses of people, in a way which is very unusual in this House, and when you have done it, you will find yourself landed in a precious muddle, and will be extremely sorry you ever made the proposal. If the County Councils use the money there will be great danger of constant disputes among themselves. There will be a danger of jobbery. I suppose you will provide whether County Councillors who are brewers are to have votes in these matters or not. If not, you are going to disfranchise a large number of constituencies, whilst if they are to vote you are going to allow that which is not allowed in the case of Magistrates. I can only say I hope that even now, at the eleventh hour, the Government will take advantage of this proposal, and will put an end to one of the most ill-advised propositions ever brought before the House.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 17, to leave out sub-section (ii.), in order to insert—

"(ii.) The sum of three hundred and fifty thousand pounds shall be applied in England for the purposes of agricultural, commercial, and technical instruction, as defined in Section eight of 'The Technical Instruction Act, 1889,' and in Wales either for the said purposes or for the purposes defined in Section seventeen of 'The Welsh Intermediate Education Act, 1889.'"—(*Mr. Arthur Acland.*)

Question proposed,

"That the words '(ii.) The sum of three hundred and fifty thousand pounds shall be applied for such extinction of licences in England,' stand part of the Clause."

*(11.23.) MR. GOSCHEN: I think it will be more convenient if we discuss the general question of our plan upon the Amendment to leave out the sub-section, to be proposed by another hon. Member.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the right hon. Gentleman that that is the Motion now made.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I am grateful to you, Sir, for pointing that out to me. Do I understand that when this question is put we shall have disposed of the point that the money be devoted to this particular purpose?

THE CHAIRMAN: The Question I put is—

"That the words, 'The sum of £350,000 shall be applied for such extinction of licences in England' stand part of the Clause."

*MR. GOSCHEN: Well, I think it will be better that, for the moment, I should reply to the observations of the hon. Member as regards his alternative scheme, and reserve what I have to say about our own plan. The hon. Member calls his a simple plan. He proposes that £350,000 should be applied to agricultural, technical, and other education, without informing the Committee of a single condition on which the money is to be granted. We are simply asked to vote £350,000 in the air for the general purposes which the hon. Member has indicated. I hope the hon. Member will do the Government the justice of acknowledging that they have shown every disposition to further the cause of education. They have carried a measure for intermediate education in Wales and also the Technical Education Act. Indeed, we are as anxious as the hon. Member himself is for the proper development of education in all its branches. We shall continue to advance in that direction. The hon. Member has used very violent language with regard to the Government proposals. I, however, will use very moderate language with regard to the proposal of the hon. Member. It would be impracticable to carry out the hon. Gentleman's "simple plan" without having some indication of the conditions upon which the money is to be expended. Although we admire the enthusiasm of the hon. Gentleman in the cause, we cannot assent to his proposal. I think the hon. Member has, in some respects, done scant justice to the immense progress made of late years in the cause of intermediate education. Splendid schools have been formed in many large towns, and in the Metropolis, by voluntary efforts and by the generous assistance of the public, and have been brought to a high state of efficiency. It will be impossible for the Government to assent to the proposal which the hon. Gentleman has made.

(11.28.) MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): Mr. Courtney, on a point of order, I wish to ask you whether the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Brigg Division (Mr. Waddy) will or will not be excluded by the ruling you have given?

THE CHAIRMAN: If the Committee resolve to retain the words "the sum of £350,000 shall be applied for such extinction of licences in England as hereinafter mentioned," it will not be competent for the hon. Member for Brigg to move his Amendment.

(11.29.) SIR W. HARCOURT: I would submit that if my hon. Friend, instead of moving to insert his Amendment after the word "mentioned," would move to insert it after the words "shall be applied," the Question put from the Chair would then read—"The sum of £350,000 shall be applied in England for the purposes," &c. The usual manner of putting an Amendment is to do so in such a form as not to shut out subsequent Amendments. If the question be put from the Chair in the way I have mentioned it will then be open for the hon. Member to make a proposal as to the method of application.

(11.30.) THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the words proposed to be left out and the words proposed to be inserted are identical so far as what he refers to —"that the sum of £350,000 shall be applied." It is not proposed by the hon. Member for Brigg, nor by other hon. Members, to strike out those words. The point in dispute arises immediately after the word "applied," and in putting the question that the words "for such extinction of licences" stand part of the clause, I gave an opportunity to the opponents of that application of all kinds to combine against it.

(11.31.) MR. J. MORLEY: Would not the point be met by the alteration of the first line and a half of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Brigg down to the word "England?"

THE CHAIRMAN: Whether the hon. Member for Brigg or the hon. Member for Rotherham (Mr. A. Acland), or any other hon. Member proposes an alternative, they all unite in opposing the adoption of the words "extinction of licences."

(11.32.) Mr. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.): May I point out that the proposals of the hon. Member are not necessarily antagonistic to the application of the money for the extinction of licences. I submit that it would not be correct to put the question in the form that the sum applicable to licences is to be left out, but that the proper way is, after the word "applied," to take a Division on the question whether so much is to be applied to technical education. There might then be enough money left for the licences.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am afraid that is not the case, as a matter of fact. I would point out that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Brigg says "the said sum."

*(11.34.) MR. S. SMITH (Flintshire): I should like to point out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that we in Wales acknowledge that we are indebted to the Government for what they have done for Welsh education, but our gratitude would be increased if the Government would adopt the suggestions which have just been made by my hon. Friend. I am certain that the County Councils in Wales will decline to apply this money in the way proposed. The Bill, if it passes, will be a dead letter in Wales, for the feeling of the public is so strong against the proposed scheme of compensation for public houses that they will decline to touch the money for any such purpose. I can, however, assure the right hon. Gentleman that if he accepts the Amendment of my hon. Friend we shall receive the money with the greatest satisfaction, and shall apply it to the cause of education. The people of Wales are very poor people, and even the aid they received in the last Act fell short of what they require to provide a complete scheme of secondary education. I, therefore, heartily support the Amendment of my hon. Friend.

(11.35.) MR. ELLIOTT LEES (Oldham): The hon. Member who has moved this Amendment proposes to devote a sum of £350,000, to be raised from the tax on drink, to the purposes of intermediate education. It follows that the more drink consumed the better for the intermediate education of the country. It follows also that the father of a large family who wishes to give his children a good education has only to consume as much drink as possible. Allow me, also, to point out that this tax will be raised almost entirely from the working men, and the hon. Member proposes to devote it to founding a system of intermediate education which will not really affect the children of the working classes, because it is very seldom practicable for the son of a working man to spare sufficient time from work after coming to the age of 13 or 14 to acquire a good intermediate education. Therefore, you will have in England, as you have in America, the complaint made by the masses of the working classes that they are taxed for the education of those who can very well afford to pay for their own education. I believe myself that intemperance does far more harm to the agricultural labourers of this country than the lack of a good education; and I am prepared to do what I can for the cause of temperance, and to pay for what I think is a good object.

*(11.39.) MR. MATHER (Lancashire, S.E., Gorton): I think the Government ought to accept the Amendment with a considerable amount of gratitude. My hon. Friend (Mr. A. Acland) appears to have made a golden bridge across a state of difficulty, and leading to the position of perfect tranquillity. We are, I think, all perfectly agreed on the policy of taxing drink, but there is great difference of opinion as to the way in which the amount thus raised should be used. I think if the Chancellor of the Exchequer adopts this Amendment all the differences will at once vanish. Something has been said about the amount of money which is spent in this country on education, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer reminded us of the closing days of last Session, when the proposals of the Government with regard to technical education were passed. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not forget that on that occasion he received the support of Members on this side of the House. The right hon. Gentleman said one of the difficulties in the way of accepting the Amendment was that my hon. Friend did not mention how the machinery for distributing the money would be devised. I need only remind the right hon. Gentleman that the machinery exists. The Science and Art Department already takes charge of money to be used for educational purposes, and I am sure the Science and Art Department would, in a few days, show the right hon. Gentleman how this money could be distributed. The Department has already published a Minute respecting the disposition of the sum of £5,000 in aid of technical education. That is, however, a mere drop in the ocean, and is merely playing with a great national question. I need not remind hon. Members that in America there is a vast amount of money distributed amongst the various States in the form of land grants with which agricultural and industrial education is encouraged and maintained. Look at the vast industrial pursuits of England, and compare our means of industrial education with those of other countries? Why, we exist under the most miserable conditions. I believe that if this £350,000 were appropriated, as my hon. Friend suggests, it would be about the most popular action on the part of the House of Commons that has taken place for a considerable number of years. I sincerely trust the House will take this matter into its serious consideration, and I thank my hon. Friend for having thought of a plan by which he can settle all our differences and satisfy the country on this question.

(11.45.) MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): Originally I had no intention of speaking on this question; but I feel I must say something by way of protest against what has fallen from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman complains that my hon. Friend has submitted a vague Resolution to the House, that he provides no machinery, and does not state the amounts to be allocated to the different counties. Has the right hon. Gentleman read the Amendment? What is the Amendment? It is that this money shall be applied in England for the purposes of agricultural, commercial, and technical instruction, as defined in the Act of last year, and in Wales either for the said purposes or for the purposes defined in Clause 17 of the Welsh Intermediate Education Act, 1889. During the discussion which took place last year it was admitted on all hands that there was nothing that was more disagreeable to us than the delay which had taken place in the House in acting on the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Technical Education, and the right hon. Gentleman tells us to-night we have passed an Intermediate Education Act for Wales, and with respect to technical education the right hon. Gentleman seems to have forgotten we passed a Technical Education Act last year. But what did you do by passing a Technical Education Act last year? You simply gave powers to the Local Authorities to do something for Technical Education. But what have you done for such education?

*MR. GOSCHEN: The right hon. Gentleman must know perfectly well it is the intention of the Government to meet what is done by the Local Authorities.

MR. MUNDELLA: I happen to have in my hand the Minutes of the Science and Art Department, from which I find what is proposed to be done under the Technical Education Act of last year. I find that the entire sum proposed to be given is £5,000.

*MR. GOSCHEN: The first year.

MR. MUNDELLA: No, Sir. I should like the Committee to understand how we are dealt with; how the Government make promises and break them.

*MR. GOSCHEN: Will the right hon. Gentleman say what promises we have made, and how we have broken them?

MR. MUNDELLA: You took power to make grants for the purposes of Technial Education. This is June. What have you done in fulfilment of your promise?

*MR. GOSCHEN: There are only three Local Authorities who are prepared to act, and we have taken such a sum as will meet all the demands that we think will be made upon us this year by the Local Authorities. When the Local Authorities exercise other powers we shall make further grants.

MR. MUNDELLA: Not more than three Local Authorities are prepared to act. Why? Because you have given them no inducement to act. You have placed no scheme of grants before them. You have made no offers to develope local efforts. One of the three Local Authorities to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer referred is Sheffield. You have been good enough to sanction the request they made, that they may at their own expense teach technical subjects. That is the extent of the assistance you have given them. Another member of the Science and Art Department shows that the sum to be allocated under the Technical Education Act of last year will during the financial year 1891-92 be £5,000. There is not a Canton in Switzerland which would not be ashamed of such a grant. I wonder what the City of Berlin would say if the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the German Empire were to propose that £5,000 should be granted for technical education to the City of Berlin. More than five times £5,000 is spent on technical education in Berlin, and yet £5,000 is all that is to be given to the whole of England and Wales. The Chancellor of the Exchequer says the Government have amply provided for what is required for 1892.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I am sorry to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman. I repeat that there has been no denial of any sum whatever. The Science and Art Department made their estimate of what the Local Authorities would ask, and if we have not given more it is not because there is any reluctance on the part of the Government or the Spending Departments, but because the Local Authorities did not put before the Government such proposals as would require more money. It is all very well for the right hon. Gentleman to sneer at the Government Department in this matter, and to contrast what has been done with what is done by other Governments. I myself was struck by the smallness of the amount, but I looked upon it as a result of the comparatively small demand made. I repeat, there is every disposition on the part of the Government to meet to the full all the requirements of the Act, and to perform the duty which Parliament has laid upon us under the Act.

MR. MUNDELLA: My complaint is that the Government have not taken the initiative in this matter. Last year they threw the whole of the responsibility on the Local Authorities. We told them last year that the Local Authorities never would take steps, and now the right hon. Gentleman says it is all very fine to contrast what we are offering with what they are doing abroad. I have never heard that any country on the Continent has given £350,000 for the compensation of publicans. They do not spend their money in that kind of way.

*MR. GOSCHEN: If I am not mistaken, in Germany they bought up the whole of the public houses, and when they did so they compensated all the publicans.

MR. MUNDELLA: They must have done it very cheaply indeed; they certainly did not do it on your terms. The publicans were not left to fix their own terms, and no taxation was laid on the German public. But I was going to say that there is another Minute of the Science and Art Department which shows how we are going to provide for technical education. The Minute is to the effect that no pupil in an elementary school is to be allowed to receive any grant from the Science and Art Department. That is a distinct blow at our higher elementary Schools. I was astonished when I read the Minute, and I should like to hear the

Vice President of the Council's explanation of it. Now, I do not think this money could be better applied than as suggested by my hon. Friend (Mr. A. Acland). The right hon. Gentleman said that the state of intermediate education in England is not what it used to be, because we have now excellent voluntary instruction. What is to be done for the great towns, where there are no endowments? I opened a splendid elementary school in Yorkshire on Saturday, and I was told by the promoters that what they want are secondary schools that the farmers and tradesmen can use. I trust that this question will be thoroughly threshed out by the Committee, and that——

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Thursday.

SUPERANNUATION (WAR DEPARTMENT) BILL.—(No. 297.)

Bill considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACTS AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 239.)

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 2.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Thursday.

ANGLESEY ASSIZES AND QUARTER SESSIONS BILL.—(No. 248.)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): There is a point that requires a little consideration, and I will ask the hon. Member in charge of the Bill not to ask the House to take it until Monday.

Consideration as amended, deferred till Monday next.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 167.)

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): May I ask if the Bill extends to Ireland?

Mr. Mundella

SIR J. LUBBOCK (London University): It does not; but, if it had been possible, I should have been quite willing that it should.

MR. M. HEALY (Cork): Will the title permit of an Amendment extending the Bill to Ireland?

THE CHAIRMAN: The title of the Bill is Public Libraries (England) Act Amendment Bill, so it would not be competent for the Committee to extend its operation to Ireland.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Thursday.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) RATING BILL. (No. 149.)

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Thursday.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 262.)

Bill considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

MOVABLE DWELLINGS BILL.—(No. 170.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read, and objection taken.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I would ask you, Sir, seeing that the House is unanimous in favour of the Second Reading of this Bill, with the single exception of the hon. Member objecting, whether there is any method by which the blocking effect of this single objection can be obviated?

MR. SPEAKER: A single objection is sufficient to arrest the progress of a Bill at this hour.

Second Reading deferred till tomorrow.

House adjourned at twenty minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 11th June, 1890

EDUCATION CODE (1890) [GRANT].

Committee to consider of authorising an additional special Grant, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, to certain Elementary Schools, in pursuance of any Act of the present Session for making operative certain Articles of the Education Code, 1890 (Queen's Recommendation signified), To-morrow.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES (PREVENTION) BILL.—(No. 210.)

Order for Consideration, as amended, read.

*(12.30.) MR. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): I beg to move the re-committal of the Bill in respect of Clause 5. I have given notice of my intention to move the re-committal in regard to Clauses 4, 5, and 6; but I understand that my hon. Friend the Member for West Salford (Mr. Lees Knowles), who has charge of the Bill, consents to the striking out of Clauses 4 and 6, and, therefore, it is not necessary to trouble the House in reference to them. Clause 5 contains a considerable amount of contentious matter, and I think the quickest way of discussing our points of difference will be to do so conversationally in Committee. It will certainly obviate the necessity of making set speeches. There is this justification for the re-committal of the Bill in regard to Clause 5, that clause was never really considered at all. It went through Committee without discussion in about one minute after midnight.

Motion, "That the Bill be re-committed in respect of Clause 5,"—(*Mr. M'Laren*,)—put, and agreed to.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

*MR. M'LAREN: I have a series of Amendments to move in this clause, and the first is on page 2, line 2, to leave out "shall have reasonable cause to believe" and insert "is in the possession of evidence." The words which provide that the medical officer shall have reasonable cause to believe are much too vague.

Question, "That the words 'shall have reasonable cause to believe' stand part of the Clause," put, and negatived.

Question, "That the words 'is in the possession of evidence' be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

*MR. M'LAREN: I have now to move, on page 2, line 41, to leave out "or" and insert "and." My object in moving the substitution of "and" for "or" is to provide that the medical officer shall not in every single instance be able of his own motion to put the Act in force on a mere supposition. The Amendment will secure that the dairy farmer shall not be made the victim of a mere supposition.

Amendment moved, Clause 5, page 2, line 41, to leave out "or" and insert "and."—(*Mr. M'Laren.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'or' stand part of the Clause."

*(12.40.) MR. LEES KNOWLES (Salford, W.): I am afraid that I cannot accept this Amendment. If "and" is substituted for "or," it will let in persons outside the district in which action is to be taken by the Local Authorities. I hope the Amendment will not be pressed.

*MR. M'LAREN: I should like to know what view the President of the Local Government Board takes of the Amendment.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I think there is great force in what my hon. Friend the Member for West Salford has said, that there might be disease outside a given area, and, in that case, the clause would be inoperative.

*MR. M'LAREN: If the disease is outside one district, it would be inside another.

*MR. RITCHIE: But there might be one district in which the Act is operative, whereas it would not affect another.

*MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.): I quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman that the clause ought to remain as it is in this respect. The substitution of the word "and" for "or" would render it necessary for the Acting Authorities to prove that damage would be done by infection before they can take action.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

*(12.43.) MR. M'LAREN: The next question is one which deals with the employment of a Veterinary Inspector. My hon. Friend has accepted the principle, but there is a difference between us as to the extent of the powers to be conferred. I propose to move in line 3, after the word "power," to insert the words "if accompanied by a Veterinary Inspector appointed by the Local Authority of the district." My main contention is that the Veterinary Inspector should be present whenever the dairy is inspected. I am strongly of opinion that the medical officer ought always to take the Veterinary Inspector with him, and I hope my Amendment will be accepted. I have received letters from the Metropolitan Dairymen's Society, and the British Dairy Farmers' Association, strongly supporting that view, and the hon. Member for East Norfolk (Sir E. Birkbeck) asks me to say on behalf of the Chamber of Agriculture, which he represents, that he much prefers my Amendment to that of the hon. Member in charge of the Bill, which provides that the medical officer shall be accompanied by a Veterinary Inspector or some other veterinary surgeon merely when he visits the cattle. He feels, as those connected with the dairy interest also feel, that it is necessary to have the Veterinary Inspector always there. My own opinion is that the duty should be discharged by the Veterinary Inspector, and that it would be quite improper to bring in any veterinary surgeon.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 3, after the word "power," to insert the words "if accompanied by a Veterinary Inspector."—(*Mr. Walter M'Laren.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

(12.48.) MR. LEES KNOWLES: I must ask my hon. Friend not to press this Amendment. The Amendment which stands on the Paper in my name goes, I think, quite far enough. The question is not so much the consideration of the health of the animals as of the persons who are liable to be infected. I am not inclined to lay much stress upon the inspection of animals in the dairies, and my proposition is that the medical officer should be accompanied in his inspection by the Veterinary Inspector, or some other veterinary surgeon. I do not think it is necessary to have two Reports, but one Report from the medical officer will be quite sufficient. Then, again, the question of time is of importance, and it is quite possible that the Veterinary Inspector might be unable to accompany the medical officer in his inspection at the proper moment.

*(12.50.) SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston): I quite agree with the hon. Member in charge of the Bill. I think that in many instances it would be found that disease has been disseminated without the animals having had anything to do with it. There are diseases which may arise from the condition of the dairy keeper's family, the state of the drainage, an imperfect water supply, and many other causes, and it is manifest that the opinion of a Veterinary Inspector upon the nature of the drainage or the water supply, or the state of the dairy keeper's family would have very little weight indeed. I, therefore, think that it would be undesirable to require the medical officer to be accompanied, in every instance, by a Veterinary Inspector. I hope that my hon. friend will withdraw his Amendment.

*(12.51.) DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeen, W.): I am of the same opinion, because I believe that in many cases the presence of a veterinary surgeon would be altogether superfluous. There are many questions in regard to the dissemination of disease by means of milk which can only be investigated properly by a medical man, and the presence of a veterinary surgeon would be of no assistance at all. I would, therefore, recommend my hon. Friend to withdraw the Amendment.

(12.52.) MR. ESSLEMONT: As one who has had a great deal of practical experience, I would also recommend the hon. Member not to press the Amendment. I think he mis-apprehends entirely the view of infection being conveyed through milk. There are many cases in which the infection does not arise from the state of the animals themselves, but from the conditions of the dairy, the drainage, the water supply, and other circumstances, altogether apart from the animals from which the milk comes. Almost without exception the milk comes from the cow pure, and the infection arises from circumstances in regard to which a veterinary surgeon can have no knowledge whatever. In Aberdeenshire it was proved that although infection was conveyed by the milk the animals themselves were perfectly healthy.

(12.54.) MR. A. PEASE (York): I hope that my hon. Friend will persevere with the Amendment. I believe that the objection to this part of the Bill originated with the Cleveland Chamber of Agriculture, and was ultimately adopted by the Central Chamber, which took into consideration all the points which have been referred to.

*(12.55.) MR. M'LAREN: I think that the hon. Members who have advised the withdrawal of the Amendment have overlooked the Interpretation Clause of the Bill in regard to the word "dairy." If it provided that a dairy should mean a room in which milk is placed in large cans there would be no difficulty, and there would be no necessity for a Veterinary Inspector to go there, or to enter a shop in which milk is sold. But "a dairy" is to include any farmhouse or cow shed, or any other place from which milk can be supplied. It is certainly my intention to take a Division upon the Amendment. I regard it as being of much importance, in view of the wide interpretation which may be given to the word "dairy."

(12.57.) MR. ESSLEMONT: In most of the cases in which infection has been communicated it has been proved that it arose from circumstances altogether outside the province of a veterinary surgeon.

(12.58.) COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I am afraid that the adoption of the Amendment would render the Act absolutely unworkable. That would certainly be the case in Ireland, because in many cases it would be necessary to send 20, 30, or 50 miles before the services of a veterinary surgeon could be obtained. There are always plenty of doctors, but the properly qualified veterinary surgeons are very few in number.

(1.0.) DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): Just a word of correction on a matter of fact. It is not absolutely a fact that all diseases connected with milk arise from impurities introduced into the milk after it has left the cow. As a matter of fact, the latest investigations indicate that at least two dangerous and terrible diseases are capable of propagation by milk exactly as it is taken from the animal—scarlatina and diphtheria. This is a recent addition to our scientific knowledge. It has been ascertained that cows do suffer from scarlatina in a form identical with that in which the disease affects human beings, and it has been proved, on the strongest presumptive evidence, that milk from animals so affected may give rise to scarlatina in human beings, and be the cause of a serious epidemic. Researches carried on at the Brown Institute show, also, that the diphtheria poison can be communicated from man to cows, and the milk from a cow so infected did give rise to diphtheria in cats and other animals susceptible to the disease. But I do not say this is an argument for accepting the Amendment. The business of the Medical Officer of Health is to trace and control an epidemic, and his investigation would be directed to the milk supply, the drainage, the water at the dairy, and the persons connected with the dairy, and if he found nothing to account for it he would naturally look at the cattle, and, in doing this, he would naturally supplement his information by applying to a competent veterinary surgeon. The medical officer would, in all probability, be a man of exceptional scientific knowledge, and he would not have recourse to the ordinary veterinary surgeon to be found in such districts as the hon. and gallant Member for Galway has referred to. An appeal from the medical officer to the ordinary veterinary surgeon would be a foolish and dangerous step.

(1.3.) MR. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): Under the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act veterinary surgeons, and especially in Ireland, have great experience in the examination of dairies, and I think in Dublin the inspection of dairies is altogether in the hands of veterinary surgeons. I think it is an extremely serious thing to entrust to a Medical Officer of Health the power to stop the sale of milk, not only from a dairy, but from a farm also. Of course the case stated by my hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Nolan) is altogether visionary, and probably the Act would not be in operation in the Union of Tuam. But there will be power in the Bill to call on the local veterinary surgeon, and I should imagine there is a veterinary surgeon there to assist the medical officer. It would be a serious thing to entrust the power to a medical officer, open sometimes to considerations apart from actual knowledge. It would be, I think, a dangerous thing to entrust him with the power of stopping a man's trade. There is no provision for compensation, and a man might be practically ruined by a single individual.

*(1.5.) SIR WALTER FOSTER: The mode of procedure would probably be this. When any epidemic is thought to be connected with a dairy, a medical man skilled in tracing the causes of an epidemic would, having exhausted all the more common causes of disease apart from the cattle, turn to the cattle, and then nobody has any objection to the intervention of the veterinary surgeon. This is a question of public administration. A locality having determined to adopt this Act, the putting in operation of the machinery for the preservation of health rests with the Medical Officer of Health, and we want to have this machinery put in operation without unnecessary delay or impediment. We have no objection to the veterinary surgeon in the case of disease of animals, but this is a question of human life and health; and if, in the course of investigation, no cause having been discovered, it is suspected that the cattle originate the disease, then the functions of the veterinary surgeon come in, and there is no objection. I hope my hon. Friend will not think it necessary to press the Amendment.

(1.8.) MR. A. PEASE: There seems to be an idea that the opinion of the Veterinary Inspector will over-ride that of the medical officer, but that is not so; the latter may pass through the cow-shed and not observe that the disease is in the cattle. This Amendment will be a protection to the farmer and also to the public.

(1.9.) MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham): My hon. Friend has introduced an Amendment, adding the words "if accompanied by a Veterinary Inspector or some other veterinary surgeon." So the point at issue is not whether the medical officer is to be accompanied, but whether it shall be by a Veterinary Inspector or some other surgeon——

*(1.9.) MR. M'LAREN: No; the point at issue is whether he shall accompany the medical officer on other occasions, or only when the visit is to inspect the cattle. The question as to whether it shall be the Veterinary Inspector or a casual veterinary surgeon, is a different point to be raised later.

(1.10.) MR. BAUMANN: But if the Amendment is carried, surely then it will be made obligatory?

*MR. M'LAREN: Quite so, but other words might be added.

(1.10.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 42; Noes 82.—(Div. List, No. 128.)

*(1.20.) MR. M'LAREN: I should like to know whether the Government approve of allowing the words "any other veterinary surgeon," to stand? My own feeling is in favour of Veterinary Inspector or officer. When the Bill was introduced, it provided that any doctor should make the inspection, but at the instance of the Government, I presume, any doctor was struck out. But now the same thing occurs in regard to veterinary inspection. It seems to me that when a public duty is to be performed it should be entrusted to a public officer. I entirely object to any casual veterinary surgeon being called in, whether qualified or not. I do not know whether it is

necessary for a qualified veterinary surgeon to have a diploma, but, at any rate, I think we ought to limit the duties to a public official. I do not know what the view of the Government may be, but that is my impression. I beg, *pro formâ*, to move the omission of the words.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words, "or some other veterinary surgeon."

*(1.21.) MR. RITCHIE: This might lead to lamentable delay in the inspection, for the Veterinary Inspector might be engaged at a distance out of the district. There would be no objection to the addition of the words "approved by the Local Authority."

*MR. M'LAREN: Something of that kind I should be willing to accept.

MR. C. ACLAND (Cornwall, Launceston): Would not the approval of the Local Anthority be equally a cause of delay? Would a general approval be sufficient?

*(1.22.) MR. RITCHIE: It would be competent for the Local Authority to nominate generally, not specially.

MR. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): There is danger in allowing the Local Authority to stamp with their approval, or mark with their disapproval, a man engaged in earning an honest livelihood. As a matter of principle, I strongly object to this.

(1.22.) MR. ESSLEMONT: It might bring us to an agreement if we inserted the word "qualified" before veterinary surgeon.

*MR. RITCHIE: Yes, the words "properly qualified" might be inserted.

*MR. KELLY (Camberwell, N.): Why should we not throw upon the Inspector the responsibility of appointing a deputy? It would be easy to avoid delay, by adding the words "appointed by him."

*MR. RITCHIE: In reference to another Bill the House universally expressed disapproval of one officer being nominated by another.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed, after "other," to insert "properly qualified."—(*Mr. M'Laren.*)

Amendment agreed to

Amendment proposed, after "dairy and," insert "if accompanied by a Veterinary Inspector, or some other properly qualified veterinary surgeon, to inspect."—(*Mr. Knowles.*)

Amendment agreed to.

*(1.23.) MR. M'LAREN: Is it possible to insert words to allow the Veterinary Inspector to make his Report in cases where he inspects cattle? I think he ought to make a Report on his inspection, and the Local Authority should have his opinion at first hand; it should not be communicated privately to the medical officer. For that purpose, I move to substitute the word "they" for "he" in line 5. I do not know whether the grammar is not a little confused; I have not had time to consider it.

Amendment proposed, line 5 omit "he" and insert "they."

(1.24.) MR. LEES KNOWLES: Two Reports, I think, would be objectionable. I think it is sufficient for the Authority to have the medical officer's Report, in the preparation of which he may have had the assistance of the Veterinary Inspector.

*(1.25.) MR. RITCHIE: It is quite clear the medical officer must be responsible in framing his Report, and must give his opinion as to detriment to health. It would be proper that this should be accompanied by a Report from the Veterinary Inspector, but the duty of framing his Report in reference to health must rest with the medical officer.

*(1.26.) MR. M'LAREN: That is precisely my view. Will the right hon. Gentleman suggest words to carry that out, and I will withdraw my Amendment? The Report of the Veterinary Inspector might be sent under cover by the medical officer.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed, line 5, leave out "or is likely to arise."—(*Mr. Knowles.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Amendment proposed,

In line 8, after the word "dairy," to insert the words "to appear before them to show cause why an order should not be issued requiring him."—(*Mr. M'Laren.*)

*(1.27.) MR. RITCHIE: To carry out my suggestion, I would propose an addition in line 7, thus—

"He shall report thereon to the Local Authority and his Report shall be accompanied by any Report the Veterinary Inspector may desire to make."

(1.29.) MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): The grammar will then require correction.

*MR. M'LAREN: That may be done on Report stage.

MR. LEES KNOWLES: I think the wording of my Amendment is rather better than that of the hon. Member's Amendment now before us.

*MR. M'LAREN: I am quite willing to accept it.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Other Amendments made.

The following Amendments were also agreed to:—Clause 5, page 3, line 10, after "by the Local Authority," insert—

"And if he fail to show such cause, then the Local Authority may issue such Order;"

Line 11, leave out from "local," to "district," inclusive, and insert "Sanitary Authority and County Council of the district or county;" line 15, leave out from "and," to "respectively," inclusive.

MR. LEES KNOWLES: In page 3, line 18, after "respectively," insert—

"An Order made by a Local Authority in pursuance of this section shall be forthwith withdrawn on the Local Authority being satisfied that the milk supply has been changed, or that the cause of the infection has been removed."

I am willing to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member to insert after the word "Authority," the words "or the medical officers on its behalf."

*MR. M'LAREN: The Local Authority may only meet once a fortnight, and it would not do for the matter to stand over for that time. I, therefore, move the insertion of the words "or the medical officer on its behalf."

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 26, at end, add—

"Provided also, that no occupier of a dairy shall be liable to an action for breach of contract on the part of any of his customers, if the breach be due to an Order from the Local Authority under this Act."—(*Mr. Knowles.*)

*MR. M'LAREN: I beg to move that the words "on the part of any of his customers" be struck out. They seem vague and unnecessary.

Question, "That those words stand part of the Amendment," put, and negatived.

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and agreed to.

Bill reported.

Bill, as amended, considered.

*MR. STEPHENS (Hornsey): I beg to move the following new Clause:—

"Whenever it shall be certified to the Local Authority by the Medical Officer of Health that it is desirable, with a view to prevent the spread of infectious disease, that they should be furnished with a list of the patients of any medical practitioner, the Local Authority may require such medical practitioner to furnish them with a full and complete list of the names and addresses of the persons such medical practitioner is attending or has attended during the past two months, and such medical practitioner shall furnish such list accordingly, and the Local Authority shall pay to him for every such list the sum of ten shillings."

I think hon. Members will feel that we are dealing only with the fringe of the matter, while my clause addresses itself to the most serious risks of infection. It has not to do with minute causes of possible infection; these can never be wholly excluded while human beings are crowded in towns under the pressure of constant association for employment or other necessities of daily life. Hon. Members must be aware that doctors often come fresh from the sources of infection, where it is abounding and profuse, fresh and in highest vitality, and, notwithstanding, cannot decline attending patients highly susceptible to infection; and I think those who have the requisite knowledge and fortitude would do far better not to send for the doctor. Again, the doctor may be called in suddenly to attend lying-in women, who are highly susceptible to infection. I am bearing in mind, more than anything, the danger of puerpal fever. I might, perhaps, refer to an incident which occurred a short time ago. The superintendent of one of our cemeteries asked me why it was that whenever they had a burial from a lying-in hospital they always had a great number of burials a week or two afterwards. Sensible men cannot be beguiled by what is said about disinfection, because they know that there is nothing settled about what is called disinfection. I myself have experimented for many years with antiseptics, with a view of seeing under what conditions they would check the development or growth of germs, and I may say that everyone who knows anything at all about this subject is aware that the whole question is fraught with great difficulty. We know on the very best authority that analysis of water is almost useless for detecting what is dangerous or otherwise. You may have water which is full of organic matter, but which, at the same time, may be perfectly innocuous, while, on the other hand, you may have water containing hardly any organic matter, but the little it does contain is likely to produce the most deadly results. Therefore, I say we ought to endeavour to get rid of these pretences, and try to get to the bottom and the truth. Of course, the doctor is, from the necessities of his occupation, in the very midst of whatever infection happens to exist. His hair and his professional black coat are mediums for the conveyance of infection. We know that cloth attracts and retains infection, collecting the deadly particles much in the same way as a cotton-wool filter collects and holds the London "blacks." Well, I ask how do you propose to disinfect the doctor? Certainly he ought to be shaved, because his hair is a sure medium for the conveyance of infection. Moreover, his woollen clothing cannot be disinfected, and if it were washed with alkalies it would soon rot and be destroyed. If we are to shrink from subjecting young and inexperienced, and, therefore, often reckless, men just emerged from the students' condition to wholesome rules and regulations, if we are to make them judges in their own cases instead of enforcing upon them some sort of tangible responsibilty, we practically leave them free to pronounce the verdict on their own proceedings. This is exactly what I wish to prevent. I do not wish to allow these men to cover up everything they do by a certificate of death, and in that way to close the chapter. I say that if the House assents to this measure, without dealing with the question I refer to in some such way as I have proposed, it will be straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel. Of course, we all know that great excuses are to be made for the doctors. They are constantly being sent for in crowded districts, where they must attend large numbers of patients suffering from every form of disease. In this way they carry contagion and infection from house to house, but, this being so, I say that we are bound to deal with the matter in a firm and sensible manner. I implore the House not to allow this Bill to pass without some legislation on this point. It is our duty to insist on imposing some sense of responsibility on those who are necessarily vehicles of infection. What the Sanitary Authorities may do when they get this Bill I cannot tell, any more than I can imagine what they will do when they get a list from the dairyman or from the laundry. All this seems to me to be merely intended to enable an interesting Report to be written after all the mischief is done. I want to stop the mischief, and I have no doubt that if the Local Authority possessed the power I propose to confer they would deal effectually with this matter. They certainly could deal with it effectually by requiring medical practitioners attending infectious cases to confine their practice to that class of disorders. That would be a sensible, a humane, and a common sense thing to do. Medical men ought not to be allowed to attend lying-in women and persons suffering from infectious diseases at the same time, but at present we have no means of preventing this. I therefore, with some confidence, commend this clause to the House as one well worthy of its acceptance.

Clause (Local Authorities may require medical practitioners to furnish list of patients,)—(*Mr. Stephens,*)—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

*(1.55.) MR. WINTERBOTHAM: I cannot think that the hon. Gentle-

man opposite has moved this clause seriously. There are, doubtless, a certain number of people who dislike the Bill, and this proposal would seen to have been put forward by them as a sort of *reductio ad absurdum.* I happen to reside in a dairy country, the vale of Berkeley, a very important dairy district, and I have endeavoured to ascertain the views of the dairy farmers in that part of the Kingdom on this subject, and in reply to what has already been said on this point I have to say that I have not heard a single word against the proposals contained in this Bill. On the contrary, all respectable people engaged in dairy farming appear to approve of the measure, and think that the only people it would hit are those who deserve to be hit. But I would ask the hon. Gentleman opposite whether he means seriously to argue that medical men are to go about clean shaved and without any clothes? If so, I recommend him to bring in a Bill to regulate the Medical Profession. That, however, has nothing to do with the Milk Bill, and I hope the hon. Gentleman will not put the House to the trouble of dividing on a proposal which I really cannot look upon as anything but a joke.

Question put, and negatived.

(1.58.) Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 14, to leave out from the word "cowshed," to the end of line 18.—(*Mr. John Kelly.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

MR. LEES KNOWLES: I am sorry to say I cannot agree with the hon. Member's proposal.

Question put, and agreed to.

*MR. KELLY: I have now to move the omission from line 22, page 3, of the word "two," in order to insert the word "four." I hope the hon. Gentleman in charge of this Bill will see his way to the acceptance of this proposal; as otherwise, seeing how generally the provisions must affect the poorer members of the community, they must commit all sorts of offences owing to their remaining in absolute ignorance of these having been created by the Act.

MR. LEES KNOWLES: I agree to the hon. Gentleman's Amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

*MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea): I beg, Sir, to move that Clause 4 be omitted.

*DR. FARQUHARSON: I must protest against the omission of this clause. I have no doubt that in assenting to its omission the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill has yielded to a pressure which is absolutely irresistible; but if he feels compelled to throw Jonah overboard in order to save his ship, it occurs to me that Jonah is, in reality, the best part of his cargo, and that if this clause and Clause 6, which I understand is also to be omitted, are both to be withdrawn, the Bill will be rendered practically useless. I should be glad if the hon. Member in charge of the measure would give us some reasons for the withdrawal of these clauses. Last year, on a Bill relating to notification of infectious diseases, it was predicted, as is predicted with regard to this measure, that the difficulties in the way of working the measure will practically render it inoperative; but that measure having been passed, the difficulties predicted with regard to it have altogether disappeared, and I have not the least doubt that if this measure were passed in its present form the objections now urged against it would also disappear. I think I may be allowed to say that I speak with some little authority on this matter, because, as a Member of a Committee dealing with matters of this kind for some years, it is within my knowledge that since the year 1882 something like 30 localities have adopted the provisions dealing with the inspection of milk outside of particular districts, while 19 other localities have adopted those clauses inside the districts. I should have liked to have heard some specific arguments or reasons of a practical nature showing that these provisions have pressed harshly and done harm to the milk trade. I do not desire to say more at the present moment, because I regard what I have already said as something in the nature of a funeral oration on this measure, should these two clauses be omitted.

MR. ESSLEMONT: Having had some practical experience in regard to the question of milk supply, as furnished from carts perambulating the streets, I may state that a large portion of the milk thus sold is supplied to persons whose names and addresses dairymen know nothing of. To attempt to lay down a rule requiring that these names and addresses should be supplied by the dairymen to the Local Authorities would be to attempt an impossibility.

*MR. RITCHIE: I think my hon. Friend has done well in proposing to omit this clause which, taking it as a whole, it would be hardly possible to work. An hon. Gentleman opposite has spoken of the omission of this clause as the throwing overboard of Jonah. Doubtless the hon. Member is well versed in scriptural history, and he will therefore remember that the throwing overboard of Jonah was not the end of that individual's career. We are in hopes of being able to insert hereafter some provision that will practically compensate for the omission of this clause.

MR. STEPHENS: I should like to add to what has been stated by an hon. Member opposite that not only do the milkmen's customers vary from day to day, but the milk supply itself is of a variable character, which fact alone would furnish a cause of considerable difficulty.

MR. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I am quite convinced that in many parts of the Metropolis this clause would be entirely unworkable. In the poorer and more crowded districts the sellers of milk have not the slightest idea of the names or addresses of the persons they supply.

Motion made, and Question put, "That Clause 4 be omitted,"—agreed to.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, to leave out Clause 6.—(*Mr. John Kelly.*)

Question proposed "That the words, 'Whenever it shall be certified to the Local Authority by the medical officer of health that it is desirable, with a view to prevent the spread of infectious disease,' stand part of the Bill."

DR. FARQUHARSON: I wish to point out that the Bill will be a much better measure if this clause were retained. If a person having scarlet fever in the house sends articles of linen to a public laundry without having disinfected them the disease may spread like wildfire; whereas if a doctor or Medical Officer of Health has reasonable suspicion that a person having an infectious disease in his family is sending clothes to a particular laundry he would warn the laundry proprietor not to admit them until they had been properly disinfected. Both the public and the laundry proprietor would benefit by this arrangement.

*SIR WALTER FOSTER: I think it would be much better if this clause were retained. I was glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) say that he looked forward to the time when some such provision might be adopted. I do not like this tentative method of proceeding in matters affecting the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, and I must say that I regard it as unworthy of a strong Government. We ought, in regard to these laundries, to have the courage of our convictions; and, for my part, I cannot see that the difficulty of carrying out this clause is nearly as great as that which belongs to the case of the retail milk-dealer. As it is, many a laundry is ruined by the fact that infected clothes are sent to it by some unscrupulous customer. This clause might be amended, so as to prevent that kind of thing to a great extent, by giving the Medical Officer of Health reasonable control over the laundries. In omitting this clause the Government are showing a timidity which, I repeat, is unworthy of them, at any rate from a scientific point of view, however commendable it may appear to them from a political point of view.

MR. H. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): I desire merely to say that I gather from my constituents there is very little local opposition to this particular clause, at any rate the opposition to it is certainly not so considerable nor of the same character as that which was directed against Clause 4, which has already been struck out. I trust the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill will stick to the clause.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. LONG, Wilts, Devizes): I desire to point out that whatever may have been the reasons which have induced my hon. Friend to consent to the omission of this clause hon. Members opposite are hardly justified in reflecting on the action of the Government. I am glad the hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir W. Foster) is of opinion that the Government is a strong Government; but I can assure him that the course he objects to has nothing to do with the action of the Government.

(2.15.) MR. LEES KNOWLES: It is absolutely and entirely a private Member's Bill, and knowing the difficulty of getting a private Member's Bill through the House, and knowing that if I kept Clauses 4 and 6 in my Bill it would delay the measure, I agreed to throw them over.

MR. STEPHENS: The hon. Member has evidently not received so many communications as I have; perhaps, because the people touched are feebler persons. The Amendment which I have just put down upon the Paper would lock up the infected place and destroy the infection upon the spot. Infected clothes scrubbed and washed, the water passing through the sewers, all of which are leaky, would spread the infection. The object of my Amendment was to prevent that. I am very glad, however, that the hon. Member has had the wisdom to withdraw the clause.

(2.17.) DR. CAMERON: I hope there will be a Division against the exclusion of this clause, because laundries are on a different footing to dairies. Disease might be propagated from a dairy, and it would take a week before you could ascertain how the disease had originated. It obviously would be the duty of the Authorities, pending the obtaining of the information, to warn the customers of the dairy, and, therefore, the business of the dairy would be injuriously affected. I can quite understand the opposition of the dairy keepers. But the laundry is on an entirely different footing. The list of customers would enable the authorities to trace the disease. Take, for example, the disease of diphtheria. Its discoverer traced the infection to certain sores which had been thought to have nothing to do with diptheria. Let us suppose that the clothes of a person suffering from an almost chronic form of diphtheria go to the laundry, and an outbreak of the disease occurs among the people of the laundry. The medical officers hears of the outbreak, and he goes to the laundry and obtains a list of the customers, and in that way is enabled to focus the infection. Such a course would be for the benefit of the laundry people and of the customers. I hope a Division will be taken against the omission of the clause.

(2.20.) MR. BAUMANN: The hon. Member for St. Pancras, living in the centre of London, where there are not many laundries, may not have had so many communications on this subject as have Members representing the suburban districts of London. The person who is to be punished for the spread of disease through infected linen is not the laundryman but the individual who sends it. A laundryman might be absolutely ruined through the ignorance or carelessness of some householder if this clause were adopted. I can tell the House this, that there is great consternation in some of the suburban districts of London with regard to this clause, which, I am perfectly certain, would inflict very serious injury, if not ruin, upon a large number of my constituents. Therefore, I do hope that the House will support my hon. Friend in cutting this clause out of the Bill.

(2.22.) MR. LEVESON GOWER (Stoke-upon-Trent): It is desirable to trace the infection to its place of origin, so that punishment may be inflicted and steps taken to prevent its spread. For these reasons I hope the hon. Member will proceed to a Division.

*(2.23.) MR. WINTERBOTHAM: If you carry a clause of this sort it will press heavily upon a number of poor washerwomen, who would be much bothered if they had to supply a list of their customers to the Local Authority. It

would have the effect of making this Bill, which is a good Bill, very unpopular indeed. Clause 7 (which it is not intended to withdraw) gives the Local Authority full power to cleanse and disinfect infected articles, and it could be better and more easily done under this supervision. Clause 6, therefore, is unnecessary and grand-motherly in its operation, and would have the effect of creating an agitation against the Bill.

*(2.25.) MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan): If there be a Division I certainly shall feel it my duty to vote for the retention of the clause, and I would point out that all these provisions are optional. Swansea, Scarborough, Newport, and Stockton, places wholly different from each other, have, last year, adopted this clause in their Local Acts. If the clause is kept in the Bill, it will be wholly within the discretion of the Authorities whether they adopt it or not. If they decide to do so, they can adopt it by the simple process of passing a Resolution, instead of being put to the expense of getting an Act of Parliament. I think the House ought to give the Authorities power to adopt the clause by resolution.

*(2.29.) MR. KELLY: If this clause is passed it will do no good, and will cause the greatest difficulty among laundrymen. The laundrymen are entitled to be protected against the criminal recklessness of those who send them infected clothing, but this clause will not give them any such protection. A man told me only two days ago that he received some wet soiled clothes which he knew at once came from an infected house, and he found on inquiry that there was an infectious disease in the house from which they had come. It was necessary that laundrymen and their workpeople should have protection against reckless or ignorant householders who send infected clothes to the laundry. But this clause would not afford that protection, while it would ruin absolutely a number of laundries. If it be, in the opinion of the Medical Officer, desirable that he should have a list of the customers of some poor unhappy laundryman, he will obtain it as a matter of course. Having obtained this list, the Medical Officer may go round to these customers. He may go to a house, and, the husband being away from home, may see the lady, who may ask him, "To what am I indebted for this visit?" He would answer, "I am Medical Officer for Kensington, and I want to know if you have any infectious disease in your house?" The lady would say, "We have no infectious disease here; if we had we should have notified it in the regular way." And she will ask how the rumour could have been spread about that there being any one there suffering from infectious disease. She would learn that her name and address had been given by her laundryman, when to protect not only her children but also the servants and everyone in the house, she would instantly receive instructions that that laundryman was not to be employed again. I maintain that this proposal would certainly persecute some poor small laundrymen out of existence. The hon. Member for St. Pancras says he has received no communications from laundrymen on this subject. But the reason for that is obvious. Very few of these persons can read, and not one in a hundred knows that this clause is hanging over them. I would entreat the House not to rush blindly into this matter. This clause has never been considered. It was passed a few minutes after 12 o'clock in an empty House, and I would put it to hon. Members whether, at the instigation of the Member for Wigan, they ought to put the laundrymen all over the country to these terrible risks? It is all very well to say that these powers are given in local Acts relating to such places as Cheltenham and Scarborough. We have no control over these Acts. One of them has over 100 clauses, and I would ask if it can be reasonably expected of us that we should wade all through these Acts to find out if there are such proposals as these contained in them? We know that not long ago, in a private Bill, dealing ostensibly with the regulation of a port, there was a clause inserted to forbid processions through the streets, and that the insertion of such a clause in a local Bill of the kind was generally condemned. I submit that the principle under discussion should be resisted in the present instance, and I protest against the fact

that it is already recognised in a private Bill, being used as an argument for its recognition in a public measure.

(2.36.) MR. ESSLEMONT: I deprecate the passing of this clause, because, unless it is compulsory and penal, it will be of no use whatever; and if you make it compulsory and penal it will be oppressive and tyrannical. It is not that we do not wish to see everything that is possible done to prevent the spread of infectious disease, but it is because we believe that it would prove embarrassing and irritating, and inflict injury on an industry, that we oppose the clause. What we have to do is to see that the medical officer shall compel parties to refrain from sending infected clothes to public laundries, and if he does his duty he can do that without exercising such tyrannous powers as those proposed upon the conductors of laundries. It would be an enormous tax on the time of the laundryman to have to supply lists of his customers from day to day. I trust that without a great deal more careful consideration and discussion this clause, which, after all, is not to be compulsory, will not be passed.

(2.40.) The House divided:—Ayes 35; Noes 166.—(Div. List, No. 129.)

Remaining words of clause omitted.

*(2.49.) MR. KELLY: I would point out that this clause is the same as Clause 31 of the Public Health Acts Amendment Bill, which is down on the Orders for to-day, save that that clause is better and more perfect. I would, therefore, invite the hon. Member in charge of the Bill to withdraw the clause.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, to leave out Clause 7.—(*Mr. John Kelly.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'where the Local Authority are of opinion' stand part of the Bill."

(2.50.) MR. LEES KNOWLES: This clause applies to London, and the one to which the hon. Member refers in the Public Health Acts Amendment Bill does not.

*(2.50.) MR. KELLY: The hon. Member is mistaken. The clause I refer to is not in that part of the Bill from the application of which the administrative County of London is exempted.

(2.50.) MR. LEES KNOWLES: Supposing the hon. Member is right, if this clause is passed the Local Authority may not avail itself of its use. It may take its remedy under the ordinary law.

Question put, and agreed to.

Other Amendments made.

*(2.53.) MR. KELLY: I now have to move in Clause 9, line 31, after the word "mortuary" to insert the words "or in a room not used at the time as a dwelling-place, a sleeping-place, or a work-room." It will be perfectly obvious to the House that men in the middle or upper classes will not have the slightest difficulty in getting a medical practitioner to give them the necessary certificate, and it seems to me to be very hard that the body of a poor child should be taken to the mortuary while the body of a child of rich parents should be allowed to remain in the parents' house. Have hon. Members any notion of what a mortuary is? I can only say that of all the horrid sights I have ever seen the sight that greets the eye in a mortuary is one of the most terrible. I cannot see why we should make any distinction between rich and poor. It will be very hard for the loving mother to allow the body of her child to go to the mortuary, and all the harder when she knows that her wealthier neighbours can easily avoid such a sacrifice.

Amendment proposed,

In page 4, line 31, after the word "mortuary" to insert the words "or in a room not used at the time as a dwelling-place, a sleeping-place, or a work-room."—(*Mr. John Kelly.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*(2.55.) MR. RITCHIE: I am bound to say I think this clause seems rather too stringent, and might operate in a way my hon. Friend would not wish, especially in the case of the poorer classes. On the whole, I think there ought to be some limitation in the nature of the proposal of the hon. Gentleman. There ought to be a duty imposed on the Local Authority to make persons ac-

quainted with the obligations incurred under this Bill. It is clear that they are of an extremely onerous character, and, therefore, some provision should be inserted by which adequate notice is given to householders of the scope of the Bill, so that it may, as far as possible, be carried out without the penalty of a fine.

MR. STEPHENS: I think the Amendment should be enlarged, so as to provide that a room so used shall not be contiguous to any room used as a dwelling-place, a sleeping-place, or a working-place. The hon. Member says the Amendment is intended for the relief of the poorer classes; but they are exactly the persons who would not be likely to possess this accommodation. Though it is a very painful thing to send a dead relative to the mortuary, yet I do hope we shall never consent to have burials immediately after death, or what appears to be death, because we know that in Paris there have been many terrible occurrences, especially in cases of infectious disease, in consequence of the system of rapid burial.

*MR. KELLY: I thank my right hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie) for his speech, and will withdraw the Amendment. In the interests of the poor I do hope he will not lose sight of the promise he has made.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Other Amendments made.

*(3.3.) MR. KELLY: With reference to Clause 14, I am afraid many poor people will commit offences under the Act without knowing it. In this clause a popular word of doubtful meaning is introduced. We know what infectious matter is; but we do not know what infectious "rubbish" is. In the Bill of the hon. Member for Wigan (Mr. F. S. Powell) there was a clause about offensive matter, and I should be glad to know why that clause has been abandoned. I formally move the omission of this clause.

Amendment proposed, in page 6, to leave out Clause 14.—*(Mr. John Kelly.)*

MR. LEES KNOWLES: I think the hon. Member's point about "rubbish" is rather a small one. It is not I but the Committee who are responsible for the word.

*MR. F. S. POWELL: As to the clause which formerly stood in my Bill, it was struck out after the consideration of this Bill in Committee, in order to avoid having the same provision in two Bills, and for no other reason.

(3.6.) MR. STEPHENS: I would ask the hon. Member in charge of the Bill whether he cannot provide that this infectious matter or rubbish should be burned. There is nothing certain about the process of disinfection as now performed.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

(3.7.) MR. M. KENNY: I move to omit the word "rubbish" and to insert the word "matter." "Rubbish" is a word unknown to the law, and I would point out, also, that if it is previously disinfected it is not infectious rubbish. I think the best course would be to drop the clause altogether. At all events, it might be put into a proper and legal shape.

Amendment proposed, in page 6, line 14, to leave out the word "rubbish" and insert the word "matter."—*(Mr. M. Kenny.)*

Question proposed, "That the word 'rubbish' stand part of the Bill."

*(3.8.) MR. RITCHIE: I may point out that this is not by any means a new word in an Act of Parliament. In the Stockton-on-Tees Extension Bill, passed last Session, this very expression "infectious rubbish" occurs.

*(3.9.) SIR WALTER FOSTER: In any Bill of this kind it is very desirable that we should insist on the most perfect way of destroying infectious matter, and if some further provision can be made to this effect it will add greatly to the value of the Bill. We want the public to learn that the best way to get rid of infectious matter is to destroy it thoroughly by fire. If we insert such a provision we shall add vastly to the value of the Bill.

Question put, and agreed to.

Other Amendments agreed to.

MR. LEES KNOWLES: I hope the House will now allow the Bill to be read a third time.

Question, "That the Bill be now read a third time," put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

DIRECTORS' LIABILITY BILL.—(No. 300.)

As amended by the Standing Committee, considered.

(3.11.) SIR H. DAVEY (Stockton): In the absence of my right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), I beg to move the first Amendment standing in his name. That Amendment is to leave out from "time," in line 14, page 1, to "shall," in line 15. The result of the Amendment would be to leave out the words "and every person who has authorised or is responsible for the issue of the prospectus or notice." The House will observe that the clause proposes that where a prospectus or notice inviting persons to subscribe shares and so forth is issued, every person who is a director of the company at the time of the issue of the prospectus or notice, and every person named in the prospectus or notice, who has ever agreed to become a director, is liable for any loss occasioned by a misstatement. Further on the clause proposes to extend that liability to every person who has, however indirectly, anthorised or made himself responsible for the issue of the prospectus. These words go far beyond the earlier part of the clause, and far beyond what I submit to the House is in accordance with sound principle. It may be that a director who undertakes to issue, or to make himself responsible, for a prospectus inviting subscriptions to shares, or debentures, or debenture stock should be liable for any mis-statement in the prospectus, but to say that every person who authorises the issue of such a prospectus should be liable seems to throw the net too wide. I can conceive many cases in which persons who have authorised the issue of a prospectus may not be in any way legally or morally responsible for the statements contained in it. There are bankers in the City of London who sometimes allow instalments of share moneys—payments on application or allotment—to be made to them on behalf of a company. It may be said they authorise the issue of the prospectus, and I think no one will venture to say that either morally or legally they ought to be made responsible for the truth of the statements contained in the prospectus.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 14, to leave out from the word "time," to the word "shall," in line 15.—(*Sir Horace Davey.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

*(3.16.) MR. WARMINGTON (Monmouth, W.): I hope my hon. Friend will not press this Amendment; indeed, I did not understand, from communication I had with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, that this Amendment was not to be proposed. Again, this matter was discussed before the Committee on Trade, and it was considered by that Committee that these words ought to be maintained. There are many cases which come before the Courts in which the person who is really responsible for a prospectus is neither a Director nor an officer of the company at all. Why should not a man be liable for that for which he is responsible? These words were inserted and retained by the Committee to meet the case of persons who, not being Directors or officers of the company, are yet responsible for the issue of a prospectus, and, in consequence, responsible also for the statements therein contained.

*MR. BARING (London): I hope these words will be retained. They were very well discussed by the Committee upstairs, and I do not think the instance of a banker who receives subscriptions or instalments will apply. If, however, a banker issued a prospectus it is desirable that he should be liable.

*(3.20.) SIR J. LUBBOCK (London University): I submit there is a great deal of difference between the words "authorised or" and "being responsible for." Almost every company which is formed in London or elsewhere has shares received by some banker, who, therefore, might be said to have authorised the issue of the prospectus. I think it would be a great injustice that any doubt should be allowed to remain on this point. My hon. and learned Friend

has argued that if we confine it to Directors we may allow those who are really responsible to escape altogether. This is not merely a question of Directors. There are medical officers and others whose names cannot appear on a prospectus without authorisation. In this matter we are imposing a great penalty, and, therefore, we ought to be clear in the language we use. If we leave in the words "is responsible for the issue of the prospectus," we should really meet the whole case. There would be no reason then for throwing great responsibilities on persons who clearly ought not to be liable. I would suggest to the hon. and learned Member for Stockton that he should withdraw his Amendment, and move to leave out the words "authorised or."

Mr. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I think the words had better stand as they are. I received only this morning a prospectus strongly urging me to take shares in a company. The person who issued that prospectus would not be responsible at all if these words were left out. I do not say these are the best words, but the clause can be re-cast elsewhere.

Mr. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): As a layman I should not like to express an opinion as to whether the suggestion of the right hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London is objectionable or not. Possibly the words "responsible or" might cover and include authorisation. Clearly, the case the right hon. Baronet quoted is not applicable. He spoke of a medical officer whose name appears on a prospectus. I imagine that a medical officer who is consulted cannot be considered to authorise the issue of the prospectus. But I object altogether to whittling away the purpose of this Bill. The truth is, it does not satisfy public opinion; it does not go far enough in protecting the public in these days where there is a very large promotion of joint stock enterprise.

(3.25.) Mr. MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr): Suppose the Directors of a company called a meeting of shareholders and asked for authority to issue Debenture Stock, and the shareholders gave authority, being ignorant of the real facts which alone were in the possession of the Directors, would the shareholders be responsible for any mis-statement? If so, that would be exceedingly hard. I do not think anybody wishes to make each individual shareholder, who is not responsible in one case out of a thousand, responsible for the action of the Directors.

Sir H. DAVEY: Perhaps the House will allow me to withdraw the Amendment, and move, as suggested by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London, to leave out the words "authorised or."

*The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. Webster, Isle of Wight): I am bound to say I think the words "authorised or" are important, and ought to be retained. The words cover the main number of cases. They cover the cases where persons who are dealing with the prospectus of a company have given authority. I certainly do not think they include the cases of bankers to a company or medical officers. If a banker is a promoter, and has authorised the issue of the prospectus, I think the right hon. Baronet will admit he ought to be open to some liability. I suggest that the words had better stand. As to the point raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for King's County (Mr. Molloy), it will be seen that by a later clause the shareholders will have a defence.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 14, to leave out the words "has authorised or."—(*Sir Horace Davey.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

(3.30.) Mr. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.): It appears to me that the words my hon. and learned Friend proposes to omit are the most valuable words in the clause. I fail to understand why any person should not answer for the words of a prospectus he has issued. The purpose of the Bill is to prevent constant swindles being perpetrated upon the public by promoters issuing documents upon which their names do not appear, and as regards which it is not easy to say who is and who is not in law responsible. If a man does it thoughtlessly, then the blame should attach to him for his want of care. I should like to see erected that standard on the subject which is contemplated in the Bill, that whosoever thinks proper to be a party to the issue of a prospectus should be made answerable for the statements in this prospectus. He may refrain from taking part in the issue, or he must take ordinary pains to see that what is contained in the statement is true.

*(3.31.) MR. BRODIE HOARE (Hampstead): It seems to me that the effect of the words might be to inflict great hardship upon bankers. Promoters bring out a prospectus and the banker authorises the use of his name, but he does not, and cannot, know anything of the truth of statements contained in the prospectus; he simply relying upon the respectability of a customer authorises the use of his name as banker; but with all deference to high legal authority, I think these words being left in the Bill might be interpreted as making the banker distinctly liable for statements in the prospectus of which he could know nothing.

*(3.32.) SIR J. GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.): These words were carefully considered in the Grand Committee, and I think it is obvious if you read the clause that each person is responsible for what he says or does on his own authority. The particular persons who authorise the issue of the prospectus are responsible, but the banker does not authorise it. All that the banker does is to undertake to perform the banking business for the company, and he is only responsible for allowing his name to appear on the prospectus as banker. I cannot see how any man can be injured in his banking capacity; he can only be affected if, in a directorial capacity, he authorises an improper prospectus. I stated upstairs, and I now repeat, we do not wish in any way to prevent legitimate employment of capital through the means of Joint Stock Companies; what we want is to prevent the illegitimate operations which do so much harm to legitimate enterprise. For this reason I support the retention of the words.

*(3.33.) SIR R. N. FOWLER (London): The name of the banker on the prospectus is merely an intimation that the account is kept at that bank, and all that the banker has to do is to satisfy himself that those who open the account are respectable people. There is much in the remarks of the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries with which I agree; but my fear is, that the effect of the Bill will be such that respectable men will be so alarmed at the possibilities that they will cease to lend their assistance as Directors, and the direction will be left in the hands of the unscrupulous.

*(3.34.) SIR JOHN LUBBOCK: The statements in regard to bankers not being responsible are satisfactory enough, but the Courts are in no way guided by what takes place in discussions in this House. As a matter of fact, bankers do authorise the issue of a prospectus on which their names appear; but the banker does not bring out the company, and he cannot be responsible for the statements in the prospectus. Yet I cannot help thinking that, taking the words in the common acceptation, anyone who has consented to act as banker might be said to have authorised and may be held responsible for the prospectus. I should like to ask my legal friends what is the distinction in meaning between the words "authorised or" and "responsible for"? We are all agreed that liability should rest where the responsibility is, and surely that covers the whole case. Whom do we touch by the use of the word "authorise"? We do not want to make the banker responsible for the prospectus when he simply acts for the company in the ordinary way of business. But I cannot help fearing that the Courts might interpret the Act as meaning the banker, because it might be asked why a distinction should be made between a "person who has authorised" and a "person responsible" for the prospectus? I cannot help thinking that to carry out the object in view it would be wiser and safer to omit the words.

(3.36.) MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): I really think the apprehension of bankers is unfounded. I cannot understand how the name of a banker appearing on the prospectus can make him responsible for the statements in the prospectus. Nor can I see how any Court can say the shareholders are liable for the consequences of an issue of stock, it is the duty of Directors to issue the prospectus, and to that duty attaches the responsibility for the statements they publish.

(3.37.) Mr. LEA (Londonderry, S.): I am not a lawyer; but it seems to me that the banker is not free from risk, although he only authorises the use of his name on the prospectus. But it is not an uncommon thing for bankers to assist the circulation of a prospectus, and so a banker might be held liable for the issue to a customer.

(3.38.) Mr. MOLLOY: The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General has spoken of the liability of shareholders, but whatever we may think on the subject has not the slightest importance in a Court of Law. If you look to Chancery decisions under another Act you will find that responsibility does attach to shareholders; and I apprehend that if a meeting of shareholders is called for the specific purpose of authorising the issue of a notice for the increase of stock, they are the authority for the issue. The Attorney General says the following clauses cover the point, but I have gone through the subsections and do not find where this is done. I do not want to press the matter, but I should be glad to know where it is that the action of shareholders is protected. It is easy to say that it is a legal opinion, but we have distinguished legal authorities taking opposite views. It is clear it is not the intention of the promoters of the Bill that shareholders shall be liable for the penalties, but it is also equally clear that if shareholders are called together for a specific purpose, and give authority to the Directors or somebody on their behalf, a secretary or accountant —then, in the terms of the Bill, they give authority for the issue of the notice. We are all agreed that is not the intention of the Bill, but why cannot some words be introduced to remove all doubt? I have very little faith in the uniformity of decisions of the Courts; they seem to me to differ as much as anything in this world can. To avoid these conflicting decisions I would suggest that some words might be added to clear up all doubts and prevent that which it is not intended by the promoters of this Bill should happen.

(3.40.) Sir H. DAVEY: If there be any distinction between the words "giving authority for the issue of a prospectus" and "being responsible for the issue," then I have no hesitation in expressing my opinion that the man who has given authority for the issue should not be liable to action. If the words "person authorised" add nothing to the intention, then they should not be inserted. I have listened with respect, as I always do, to everything that comes from the Attorney General and my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Reid), but I cannot bring myself to agree in their opinion altogether. I am not prepared to say that a banker who has authorised the use of his name in some such manner as this—"such and such a bank is authorised to receive subscriptions for so many shares in such and such a company" —would not be held to have authorised the issue of the prospectus within the meaning of the clause. There may be danger of this, and I cannot conceive that it is the meaning or intention of the House that a banker in that position should be liable to an action for damages. Again, I do not think that any sufficient answer has been given to my hon. Friend below the Gangway, when he pointed out that shareholders authorise the action of Directors in issuing stock, and these shareholders might—I do not wish to go further — be held liable for damages under the clause. I can find nothing in the subsequent subsections which would relieve shareholders from that liability. It is clear that the words may hereafter have a meaning attached to them which is not the meaning and intention of the House, and I feel it my duty to go to a Division on the Amendment.

*(3.43.) Mr. WARMINGTON: I think the words are most important, and that the words "has authorised" are better than "is responsible for." Really in these matters we are bound to give the Courts the credit of the exercise of common-sense. It is clear that the banker who places his name on a prospectus does so as indicating that he, in

his ordinary way of business, receives money on account of the company. He does not issue the prospectus, nor do the persons to whom the prospectus is sent accept the statements therein as the statements of the banker.

*(3.45.) MR. KELLY: The solicitor's name appears on the prospectus equally with the banker's name, and it is not feared that the solicitor will be liable. If it were otherwise, that body would be soon up in arms, as the solicitors must be in a worse position than the bankers, seeing that unlike the latter, they would have distinct knowledge of the statements in the prospectus, and necessarily so, as in many cases the solicitors actually draft them. The meaning is clear, I think; and I hope the words will not be omitted, for it may be that authority can be proved where responsibility cannot be proved.

(3.46.) MR. HALDANE (Haddington): The words have a meaning of some kind, or they should not be inserted, and it is the duty of Parliament to supply the common-sense, not to trust to the Courts finding it out. There is a section in the Companies Act of 1867, as to which it has been said over and over again in a tone of pain by the Judges, that they can make neither head or tail of the meaning of the Legislature. It is a disputed question whether a promoter should have to declare his marriage settlement. Lord Bramwell on the last important case declined altogether the task of discovering the common-sense of the section. He declared that if Parliament did not make its meaning clear it was no business of his, and it would lead to confusion to attempt to bring out what the Legislature ought to have said. Owing to the loose drafting, the result is that nobody, not even the Judges, have anything like a clear knowledge of the law. What the meaning and distinction may be between "authorised" and "responsible for," I do not know, and I decline to rely on conjecture, and so I shall give my vote for the Amendment.

MR. LEES KNOWLES: Will the Attorney General indicate the words which afford protection to shareholders?

*(3.48.) SIR R. WEBSTER: The arguments which have been used have not altered the opinion I have already expressed. The words I referred to are to be found in the subsection which exempts from liability where there is reasonable ground for believing that the statements are true upon such examination as may be reasonably required. It is no part of the duty of shareholders to make themselves responsible for the language the Directors may use.

(3.49.) MR. BIDDULPH (Herefordshire, Ross): Perhaps there would be a solution of the difficulty in a clause exempting from liability any person who authorises his name to appear as banker.

(3.49.) MR. ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): High-sounding names upon a prospectus, as well as the statements therein, are held up as inducements to subscribers. It is against this the Bill seeks to guard the public, and I think it is undesirable to contract the security which the Bill now provides by limiting the liability.

*(3.50.) MR. BRUNNER: Authorisation by shareholders is often very minute, and it is no uncommon thing for the actual words of a prospectus to be read to, and accepted by, the shareholders, so that they might be held responsible for every detail.

*(3.51.) MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport): Even where this does not occur, and in the course of a long experience I do not remember such an instance; it seems to me that the directors act as agents and representatives of the shareholders, and they may have no authority except such as is directly conferred by the shareholders. The shareholders, then, may be held to be the authority, and they can only get out of the liability by examining, for the purpose of verification, all the statements of the directors. Apart from this objection, the words are meaningless, or have a meaning one cannot find out.

*(3.52.) SIR E. J. REED (Cardiff): To strike out the words would, it seems to me, take away responsibility from those who derive immediate and large advantage from the floating of a company, and fix it upon the unfortunate

directors, who receive nothing but a very small and, more or less, remote advantage. If a banker or a solicitor joins in authorising a prospectus, why should he escape all responsibility, he having been largely remunerated, while the directors may not have been remunerated at all for their work? Nothing is more common than for directors to work on for months without any remuneration, while banker, solicitor, and others receive immediate advantage from what they do. The Amendment would, it seems to me, relieve from responsibility those who receive the largest advantage from the transaction.

(4.0.) The House divided:—Ayes 193; Noes 132.—(Div. List, No. 130.)

*Sir J. GOLDSMID: The next Amendment raises a matter of considerable importance. I observed when the matter was before the Grand Committee upstairs that a man ought not to be made liable for an inaccurate or misleading statement, as it is indefinite.

Sir H. DAVEY: Before that question is discussed I have an Amendment to line 17, to which I think there is no objection. I beg to propose it.

Amendment proposed, in Clause 3, page 1, line 17, to insert the words "on the faith of such Prospectus or Notice."—(*Sir H. Davey.*)

Question proposed, "That those words stand part of the Clause."

(4.14.) Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I think it is doubtful whether it is desirable to insert these words. Hon. Members must know that there have been cases in which persons have taken shares because some broker or some one else recommended them to do so, and not because of the contents of the prospectus. Why should the directors be made liable in such a case as that? I believe that if the Amendment is carried, a vast number of directors will be able to evade their responsibility through the inability of people to swear that they absolutely took the shares on the faith of the prospectus.

(4.15.) Mr. ISAACSON: I remember a case in which a public company was issued with a subscribed capital of £1,000,000. The solicitor told me that only one shareholder had taken the trouble to go to his office to read over the prospectus and ascertain what the merits of the company were, and that gentleman, after reading the prospectus, said he would have nothing more to do with the matter. In a few months the company went into liquidation, and the shareholders lost their money. I think that this Amendment will protect the public. If the House only knew how many millions of money are lost through bogus companies, foisted on the country, owing to the specious statements contained in the prospectuses, it would see the value of this Bill. A company was attempted to be foisted on the public the other day; it was a gold company, but when the matter was carefully looked into, instead of the mine being rich in gold, it was proved that it was the very reverse, and scarcely any gold had ever been taken from it.

*(4.18.) Sir R. WEBSTER: I think the words ought to be inserted, otherwise this will be the result—that persons who never have seen the prospectus will, on observing that a man who did subscribe on the faith of the prospectus has successfully brought an action, immediately go into Court, although they did not in the least rely on the prospectus.

*(4.19.) Mr. WARMINGTON: Under the Bill no person will be able to recover any damage except that which is attributed to the statements in the prospectus.

Question put, and agreed to.

*(4.20.) Sir J. GOLDSMID: I now move the next Amendment standing in my name. The words I propose to strike out are, in my opinion, too indefinite, and not sufficiently precise.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 18, to leave out the words "inaccurate or misleading," and insert the word "false." —(*Sir Julian Goldsmid.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'inaccurate or misleading' stand part of the Bill."

*(4.21.) MR. WARMINGTON: I am willing to strike out the word "inaccurate" and substitute for it "untrue." "Misleading," however, covers ground which ought to be retained. There are many cases in which a prospectus is misleading by reason of what it does not say, but of what it does suggest. I think that the *suppressio veri* is as dangerous as the bare statement of that which is false. If the Amendment is limited, as I suggest, I shall be willing to accept it.

*(4.22.) SIR J. GOLDSMID: I will then divide the Amendment into two parts.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 18, leave out the word "inaccurate" and substitute the word "untrue."

Agreed to.

*(4.23.) SIR J. GOLDSMID: I now move to omit the words "or misleading." There are many statements which might be misleading to an unintelligent person, but which to an ordinary mind are by no means misleading. Something is required to qualify the word "misleading." If it is to be retained at all, it should be provided, for instance, that the statement complained of was materially misleading. I think, however, these words may well be omitted. If a statement is misleading in the sense that it is untrue, then that is provided for in the Bill by the word untrue which we have just inserted.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 18, to leave out the words "or misleading."—(*Sir Julian Goldsmid.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'or misleading' stand part of the Bill."

*(4.24.) THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): This matter was very fully discussed in Grand Committee. In my opinion more harm is done by *suppressi veri* than by *suggestio falsi*, and I am afraid in these matters we must have regard not merely to the persons of superior intelligence, but also the persons of inferior intelligence, who are most likely to be entrapped by a prospectus that does not tell the whole truth. I hope the Committee will retain the word.

(4.25.) MR. E. ROBERTSON: I think that the word "misleading" has one grave defect—namely, that it does not describe a quality in the statement itself at all, but describes something about the man who made it. I shall vote for the exclusion of this dangerous word.

*(4.26.) MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): The words appear to me to be absolutely necessary, and I shall vote for their retention. I take it that, in deciding whether a statement was misleading, the question would be, not whether it misled the individual plaintiff but whether it was such as to mislead an average mind. I, therefore, disagree with the hon. Member who last spoke.

(4.27.) SIR H. DAVEY: "Misleading" is a vague word; the full meaning of it the House itself does not grasp. Speaking for myself I am absolutely unable to say what would be the meaning attached to the word by a Court of Law. Is it intended to mean "misleading in fact," or only "calculated to mislead?" It is a subjective word, having reference not to the person who uses certain language, but to the person to whom the language is addressed. This word is not required in order to meet the case of *suppressio veri*, for it has been decided in more than one case by the House of Lords that statements, though literally true, are in fact untrue, owing to their not conveying the whole truth. I suppose if the Government are in favour of these words they will be retained, but I warn the House that if the House retains this vague word it will be the cause of increased litigation.

*(4.30.) MR. SYDNEY GEDGE: I would appeal to the Government to allow this question to be determined on argument and reasoning by the votes of those who are qualified to give a decision by having heard the discussion. In the last Division the Government Whips sent into the "Aye" Lobby Members who had not heard the question argued, and I appeal to the Government not to pursue that course now, but to allow the

question to be decided by those who have heard the arguments. I am a strong supporter of the Government, but I do not think it is necessary I should give them support in a matter of this kind.

*(4.30.) Mr. KIMBER (Wandsworth): We have a definition of the expression "untrue statement," upon high authority, that it covers mis-statements of fact and omissions of material fact that convey a false impression. Every lawyer in the House knows that all our Courts of Law act on that definition. If the word misleading is added, the Courts, in construing the section, will attach some meaning to it, other than the meaning untrue. The hon. Member for Northampton speaks of the "average mind," but what is the average mind? As represented on the Jury and among the witnesses, it might be partly in one direction and partly in the other. Some witnesses would say they were not misled by a statement, while others would declare they were, and the latter would, however stupid, justify a verdict. The uncertainty of the words would, I am sure, lead to an enormous amount of litigation, and be of detriment to joint stock enterprise, by which so large a part of our mercantile and industrial business is now conducted.

*(4.31.) Mr. WINTERBOTHAM: We had this point under discussion in Committee, and the opinion I there expressed was that penalties enforced in Criminal Courts should be only for criminal actions. A man may with a perfectly honest intention put his name to a prospectus, in which a statement appears by which some individuals may be misled. I think the word "misleading," if unqualified, is too wide, but I would not object to directors being made responsible for anything that is "intentionally misleading."

*(4.32.) Sir R. WEBSTER: In reference to what has been said by my hon. Friend (Mr. Gedge) it will be observed that the House has only confirmed the opinion of the Committee, and in the Division I am not aware that any pressure was used by the Government to bring this about. As to the point before us, I do not think it is necessary to consider whether it is a "subjective" or "objective" case; my own opinion is that it refers to the statement, not to the person. I think the law with regard to directors' responsibility requires strengthening. Nine out of ten misleading statements in prospectuses will, no doubt, be cases of *suppressio veri*, and while I quite agree with the hon. Member for Stockton as to the decisions of the House of Lords as to the meaning of the word "untrue," that word will not cover all cases of *suppressio veri*. The word "untrue" will merely make directors consider whether what is stated is true, without any consideration of whether all that ought to be stated is stated. I do not think that the retention of this word will impose on directors any additional responsibility that they ought not to bear.

(4.34.) Mr. LAWSON: The question is, Does the House want to strengthen the law or not? If this word is struck out, and only false statements are touched, there is no reason for amending the law. Our object is to get at the men who, either carelessly or knowingly, allow their names to be put to misleading statements. There are a number of gentlemen of rank and title who lend their names to companies, in the City of London, and pocket the fees as directors, without really attending to the business of the undertakings with which they are connected, and it is desirable to make these guinea-pig directors responsible for statements which appear over their names. I hope the House will not be led away by tenderness for this class of financiers. The public expect protection from transactions that really amount to fraud. I hope the word "misleading" will be retained.

*(4.35.) Sir E. J. REED: I would ask the House to consider the question whether, in the attempt to strike at one evil by the use of this word, they will not be inflicting a still greater evil. Suppose promoters sitting round a table, and considering the terms of a prospectus. It is quite possible for them to exhaust every means to ascertain if the statements set out are true, and the clause imposes upon them the obligation of testing the truth of each statement. But how can any man undertake that any particular statement shall not

mislead anybody who reads it? In the attempt to defend the community against one evil you are about to inflict a vastly greater evil. I cannot imagine how any joint stock enterprise can proceed if the private fortune of every director is to be at stake in the event of some statement he could never know would be misleading being long years afterwards judged to be misleading. I do not think that is what the House intends. If you can find words to bring punishment home to men who make statements intentionally or recklessly misleading that will be justifiable. We none of us have any sympathy with the man who recklessly puts misleading statements before the public for his own advantage, but with a provision like this I think we may say good-by to legitimate joint stock enterprise.

*(4.38.) MR. GROTRIAN (Hull, East): There is force in what the hon. Member for Cardiff urges, but we must consider this clause in connection with Sub-sections A and B, and then I think it will be found that the standard is not at all too high, and the measure of responsibility to the directors not too great. Sub-sections A and B have so watered down, so diluted the responsibility that the Bill, if amended in the direction indicated, would be worth very little indeed. After all, what is the liability attaching to a director in regard to untrue or misleading statements? It is not very onerous, for if hon. Members will refer to the sub-sections I have mentioned they will see that he escapes liability for a misleading or untrue statement if he can show that he made reasonable examination and inquiry into the statement, and had reasonable ground for believing, and did believe, that the statement was true. If the statement is made on the authority of an expert, he has simply to show that it was a correct copy or extract of the Report of the expert. So, after all, the responsibility and liability of the director is very small, and if the word "misleading" is left out, that will so further dilute the Bill that there will be little strengthening of the law in it. I would urge the House to accept the words as they stand. The question was thoroughly thrashed out in Committee, and the conclusion arrived at was that the word was necessary.

(4.42.) MR. LABOUCHERE: I do not think the word "untrue" would cover all cases of *suppressio veri.* I would engage to write out a most enticing prospectus, with not a single word of untruth in it, and yet which, by its omissions, would give an utterly false impression of the actual state of facts to the person asked to take shares. For instance, suppose I want persons to take shares in a mine. A prospectus is issued, and a description is given. It is easy to put forward the opinion of an expert that there in an immense quantity of metal in the mine, and I may say nothing more. But it may be the mine is situated in a country where fever prevails to such an extent that you cannot get people to work the mine, or means of transit may be wanting, and cost of carriage immense, or to obtain labour may be impossible, except at unremunerative rates, or the mine may be full of water, or there may be many other reasons why it cannot pay for the working. But all this would not be covered by the word "untrue," and these *suppressio veri* will remain untouched unless you retain the word "misleading," and the honest director is fully protected by the proviso.

(4.45.) MR. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I hope the House will accept the Amendment on the authority of the hon. and learned Member for Stockport, who has indicated the dangers that may arise in continuing the clause by the Courts. I do not understand the Attorney General to defend the words; he only said the word "untrue" required strengthening.

(4.50.) The House divided:—Ayes 268; Noes 106.—(Div. List, No. 131.)

Amendment proposed, after the word "misleading," to insert the words, "by reason of the suppression of material facts."—(*Sir Julian Goldsmid.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

*(5.9.) SIR J. LUBBOCK: I beg to move, in Clause 3, line 19, to leave out

"or in any Report or Memorandum incorporated therewith or referred to therein." The House will observe that these words make directors and other persons responsible for issuing in a prospectus not merely what they may say themselves, but anything said by anyone else in a Memorandum to any part of which they have referred. In making people liable for penal consequences it is important that you should confine yourself to that which they have done themselves and not that which has been done by other people. Surely we are straining the matter too far to say that persons issuing a prospectus shall be responsible for the whole of any document which is referred to therein. No doubt the law should be made stringent, but you should be careful, in doing that, not to overshoot the mark, and not to go beyond what you intend. I would ask the hon. Member in charge of the Bill what he thinks he will gain by including these words. No doubt it is desirable that in a prospectus as much information as possible should be conveyed, but if you issue words as vague as these, the statements in prospectuses will be confined within the narrowest limits, lest in referring to a Memorandum or document prepared by someone else, and giving valuable information, they might be made liable for statements not contained in the part referred to.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 19, to leave out the words "or in any Report or Memorandum incorporated therewith or referred to therein."—(*Sir John Lubbock.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

*(5.12.) MR. BRUNNER: I desire to support the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of London, because it seems to me clear that if a Report or Memorandum is incorporated in a prospectus it is in the prospectus, and because a Report or Memorandum might even be referred to in terms of condemnation.

*(5.13.) MR. WARMINGTON: I hope the Grand Committee will be supported in this matter. It was mentioned to the Committee, and not contradicted, that the Reports and Memorandums referred to in the prospectuses are often the most misleading of the documents issued. It should be remembered that a director will only be responsible for statements either false to his own knowledge, or which he could, by the exercise of ordinary care, have discovered to be false.

*(5.15.) SIR E. J. REED: I would point out that if a delegate is sent to a distant country to report on a variety of subjects, and if, on his return, the Directors of a company with whom he is not associated are to refer in their prospectus to any part of his Report, they will be held responsible for any misstatements in the rest of that document. That, surely, is going too far.

(5.16.) MR. E. ROBERTSON: I would remind the hon. Gentleman that he has overlooked the effect of Sub-section B, which makes an important distinction between statements in prospectuses and statements in Reports. For the accuracy of a statement in a prospectus a Director is responsible, but for a statement in a Report he is not responsible. He is responsible for seeing that the Report of Valuation is made by the person whose name it bears, and that there is reasonable ground for believing, not that the statements are true, but that the Report has been made in good faith, and that the person making it was competent to do so.

*(5.17.) SIR E. J. REED: There is a large protection in those words, and, under the circumstances, I will not press my argument. I am not like some hon. and learned Members—so expert in dealing with Acts of Parliament as to be able to say a thing in one line and unsay it in another.

*(5.18.) SIR J. LUBBOCK: I am aware of the words referred to, but they deal with statements made in the prospectus. My Amendment deals with statements not made in the prospectus, but contained in a document only referred to in it.

*(5.18.) MR. BRADLAUGH: I am surprised to hear the right hon. Baronet supporting the Amendment by this argument. It is clear it is bad to circulate statements in a paper circulated

with, though not part of that prospectus. The clause must remain as it stands, unless you wish to make it valueless.

(5.19.) MR. MURPHY: Many matters may be referred to in a prospectus which really are not part of the prospectus but yet impart valuable information. You would make a Director liable to penalties if any statement of this kind should be unintentionally misleading.

(5.19.) SIR H. DAVEY: I have never heard of statements that ought to be in the body of a prospectus being put into a Report or Memorandum. Of course, where that takes place such statements should be treated as having been made by the person who issues the prospectus. I again say that the Courts are strong enough to deal with such cases. They would deal with Reports and Memoranda of this kind exactly on the same footing as the body of the prospectus. I think, however, that this argument is misleading, for a Report or other document may be referred to in a prospectus without being incorporated therein, and for that reference a Director would be liable, if there were any inaccuracy in the document. I am told that this proviso would protect the Director, but that only refers to the Valuation Reports of the experts. Documents may be referred to that are neither Reports nor valuations by experts, and in reference to these it is necessary that protection should be given. Sub-section "A" refers to any incorrect or misleading statement of fact not purporting to be made on authority. Is it intended that if a statement is made by somebody else, and merely referred to in the prospectus issued by me, I am to be liable if the statement is untrue?

*(5.24.) SIR R. WEBSTER: It is a very common thing to send out with a prospectus papers or Reports which are intended to contain information, but which are not actually part of the prospectus itself. It seems to me that no harm could be done by leaving these words in the clause. Supposing Reports or Memoranda referred to in the prospectus to contain statements of fact, we think that the person held responsible for them ought to make the same inquiry with regard to them as with regard to the prospectus itself.

*SIR J. LUBBOCK: If the Government will consider the point, I shall be willing to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Another Amendment made.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 22, to leave out the words "of fact."—(*Mr. Edmund Robertson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'of fact' stand part of the Bill."

*(5.26.) SIR J. GOLDSMID: The Committee considered this point carefully, and came to the conclusion that these words should remain in.

*(5.27.) MR. SYDNEY GEDGE: The clause must run on all fours: in the previous part the words are "untrue or misleading statements," without the words "of fact." Therefore, if you insert those words in the latter part, there will be nothing to which the word "such" will refer, and the clause will be hardly grammatical.

*(5.28.) MR. WARMINGTON: I think the clause had better remain as it is.

MR. E. ROBERTSON: I beg to move that this Debate be now adjourned. It is impossible to complete the discussion in the time at our disposal.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has spoken already, and therefore cannot make that Motion.

MR. ISAACSON: I beg to move the adjournment of the Debate.

*(5.30.) MR. SPEAKER: It is adjourned by the clock.

It being half an hour after Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Wednesday next.

ORCHARDS RATING EXEMPTION BILL.—(No. 177.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Does this Bill extend to Ireland?

*MR. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.): It does not.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to move, Sir, that you report Progress. If English orchards are to be exempted from rating I do not see why the Irish orchards should not be also.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

*(5.31.) Sir M. HICKS BEACH: The original Act does not apply to Ireland.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Well, then, we will make it, before we go much further.

*Mr. HOBHOUSE: I would appeal to the hon. Member not to do that. The original Act is one of some 300 sections.

(5.32.) Mr. T. M. HEALY: I do not see why if English orchards are exempted from rating Irish orchards should not be.

Mr. LONG: Let me explain what this Bill does. Certain exemptions have existed with regard to the rating of market gardens and woods. There has been a doubt whether this included orchards. The object of this Bill is to remove that doubt. The original Act does not apply to Ireland.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill reported; as amended; to be considered to-morrow.

NEW LICENCES (IRELAND) BILL.

(No. 249.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.—(*Mr. Sydney Gedge.*)

*Mr. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I hope that Motion will not be pressed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): I think it is expedient that Progress should be reported. We have no objection to the Bill running concurrently, as it were, with the Government proposal; but the substance of it is down on the Paper as an Amendment to the Licensing Bill.

(5.36.) Mr. T. M. HEALY: Faith has been entirely broken by the Government with us in this matter. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury distinctly promised that he would recommit the Licensing Bill in order to insert Irish clauses. Like every other pledge made about Ireland, that promise was broken. The right hon. Gentleman has himself put down on the Paper clauses which he says meets the case. Of course, it would be out of order for me now to discuss those clauses further than by saying that they do not meet the case. Whoever drafted them—whether it was the learned Attorney General for Ireland himself, which I do not believe, or the officials of the Irish Office—they are a scandal of draftsmanship, and are entirely unsuited to the case, and, in my opinion, utterly confuse the law in Ireland with regard to licences. I think they are most discreditable to anyone who had anything to do with putting them on the Paper, or with drawing them up. Then we do not know yet when the Government propose to take their Local Taxation Bill. The Conservative meeting to-morrow may, for all we know, lead to the dropping of that Bill; and, as far as we can understand the intentions of the Government, the measure will be postponed until next Session. If so, how can the Bill proceed *pari passu* with the Government Bill? I came over from Ireland purposely to get a stage of this Bill. We are continually told that this House is always ready to deal with Irish subjects. Here is an admirable specimen of the way in which the House is prepared to deal with Irish matters. You have a clause suitable to England; but I defy anybody, except after argument, to say what is the meaning of the clause the Government propose to put on the Table in regard to Ireland. A more scandalous way of meeting a matter has never been resorted to in my experience, even under the administration of the right hon. Gentleman. If it is possible to divide against the Motion I shall do so. What is now happening shows how unwise I was to allow the Orchard Rating Bill to go through. Of course, the Unionist Gentlemen whose Bill I allowed to go through has now disappeared.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I hope the hon. Gentleman will not press the Motion to report Progress. The substance of this Bill ought to have been included in the Local Taxation Bill. The hon. and learned Member for Longford introduced this Bill to make good the deficiency. Why not pass this Bill now, rather than risk a wrangle over the question on the Local Taxation Bill?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not wish to prolong the discussion, though I must protest against the tone adopted by the hon. and learned Member for Longford. The hon. and learned Gentleman has thought fit to lodge the most unfounded accusations against the First Lord of the Treasury. He has accused my right hon. Friend of having broken faith, and goodness knows how many other crimes and misdemeanours. He must know perfectly well that clauses including the licensing proposals of the Government are upon the Table of the House. They fully carry out the intention of the Government. The hon. and learned Gentleman has denounced the drafting of the clauses; but I imagine that when the clauses come to be discussed it will be time enough to consider which of the two high legal authorities—the Attorney General for Ireland and the hon. and learned Gentleman—is the better. There is great inconvenience in adopting so unusual a course as that the hon. and learned Gentleman suggests. When the Government have a Bill on the Table of the House carrying out a general scheme of licensing in England, Scotland, and Ireland, it would be extremely inconvenient to consider a separate measure referring to Ireland alone.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman talks of a general scheme of licensing, but the proposal as to Ireland only appeared on the Paper to day. It was because of the omission to deal with Ireland in any way that I drafted my Bill.

Question put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

HARES PRESERVATION BILL LORDS]. (No. 187.)

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Wednesday 25th June.

INTOXICATING LIQUORS (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 7.)

Order for Committee read.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: There are three Instructions on going into Committee. Will you, Sir, kindly say whether those Instructions are relevant?

***Mr. SPEAKER**: I think the Second Instruction would be in order.

Committee deferred till Wednesday next.

SOLICITORS (MAGISTRACY) BILL. (No. 99.)

Bill considered in Committee.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Wednesday next.

PHARMACY ACT (IRELAND) (1875) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 241.)

Bill considered in Committee.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

ALDERSHOT ROADS BILL.—(No. 298.)

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I object.

Mr. BRODRICK: I hope the hon. and learned Gentleman will allow this Bill to pass. Its only object is to protect the lives ——

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I am sorry, but after the treatment my Licensing Bill received I shall object every time I can.

Second Reading deferred till to-morrow.

RATING AND VALUATION (SCOTLAND).

Ordered, That Five be the Quorum of the Select Committee on Rating and Valuation (Scotland).—(*Mr. Edmund Robertson.*)

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 12th June, 1890.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE (PREVENTION) BILL.—(No. 117.)

SUPERANNUATION (WAR DEPARTMENT) BILL.—(No. 118.)

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª, and to be printed.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Borught from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª To-morrow.—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*) (No. 119.)

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS BILL.—(No. 52.)

THIRD READING.

Bill read 3ª (according to Order).

Order of the Day for the Third Reading, read.

LORD MONKSWELL: My Lords, at the end of Clause 12 I propose to add the words of which I have given notice. The object of this Amendment is to check the practice of making false statements as to the age of a child. It depends upon the age of a child who is brought before a Magistrate whether he is sent to an industrial or to a reformatory school. Consequently, it is to the advantage of a child that his parents should make him out to be younger than he really is, and this Amendment is to do away with that practice. The clause empowers the Court to make inquiry as to the age of a child, and to issue an order, but empowering a child to be discharged from a school on his being proved, to the satisfaction of the Secretary of State, to have attained the age of 16. This will enable the Secretary of State, if the child might have been originally committed to a reformatory school, had his true age been known, if he is of opinion that the further detention of the child is desirable, to order him to be transferred to a reformatory school, there to be detained subject to the provisions of the law relating to reformatory schools. Of course, he would not consider it desirable unless the child had been guilty of bad conduct. The Royal Commission on Industrial and Reformatory Schools proposes that the age, as ascertained by the Magistrate, should be considered the true age. The Committee disagree with that view, and I hope the noble Viscount sees no objection to the Amendment.

Amendment moved, in Clause 12, page 5, to add at the end of the Clause the words—

> "Unless the child might have been originally committed to a reformatory school had his age been known, in which case the Secretary of State, if he is of opinion that the further detention of the child is desirable, may transfer him to a reformatory school, there to be detained subject to the provisions of the law relating to reformatory schools."—(*The Lord Monkswell.*)

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Viscount CROSS): My Lords, I do object to this Amendment, and the objection I have is of a serious character. I quite agree that the alteration made in Standing Committee was in mitigation of what had been proposed by the Royal Commission; but I think the noble Lord proposes to go a step further than that, which is, I think, very unwise. I understand he proposes that if a mistake has been made in the age, and the child was really over 14, and might, therefore, have been sent to a reformatory in the first instance, the Secretary of State may make an alteration in the order and send him to a reformatory school.

LORD MONKSWELL: Not exactly. He has power under the Bill, at present, to send children to a reformatory school in certain cases.

*VISCOUNT CROSS: But there is this requirement, that the child who is to go to the reformatory school must have been convicted. I do not think it would be for the Secretary of State to convict, and, therefore, I hope the noble Lord will withdraw his Amendment. I could not possibly allow it to pass to-day, because it would not do to give power to the Secretary of State to convict. The child ought, of course, to be convicted by the Magistrate.

LORD MONKSWELL: I understand it is merely a question of age. He must, at all events, be found guilty of an offence.

*VISCOUNT CROSS: No, this is a totally different question. That is quite against the theory of industrial schools. Before sending a child to a reformatory school, he must have been convicted, and I object strongly to the Secretary of State having power to convict. A child sent to an industrial school is not convicted, though the Magistrate must be satisfied of his guilt.

LORD MONKSWELL: The child would, undoubtedly, be subject to conviction if he were of the age provided, but, as he represents himself, or is represented to be, below that age, the Court finds him guilty, and then sends him to the school. I must say I fail to see the objection. It was a somewhat strong measure for the Committee to state its opinion after what had been done by the Royal Commission. It was considered that the age of the child, as ascertained by the Magistrate, should be considered the true age to all intents and purposes.

*VISCOUNT CROSS: If any mistake has been made, it must be corrected by the Magistrates. The Secretary of State cannot set it right. I am quite sure it would not do to give that power to the Secretary of State.

LORD MONKSWELL: Then I will withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Amendments made.

*LORD NORTON: My Lords, I move the omission of Clause 30 and the following clauses. My Amendment is to relieve the Bill of no less than 11 clauses, establishing truant schools all over the Kingdom. I maintain that these truant schools are absolutely and positively useless, if not mischievous. Probably the noble Viscount will defend them upon the Report of the Commission. The ground upon which they were recommended was that they would afford means for classification. If the noble Viscount defends these truant schools upon the authority of the Report of the Commissioners on which the Bill is founded, I beg to call his attention and the attention of the House to what appears on the face of the Report upon the subject. The reason the Commissioners recommend the increase of truant schools is that they think it necessary there should be further classification of juvenile offenders beyond that permitted by the industrial and reformatory schools in order that the younger should be kept separate from the older offenders. Now, in the first place, it is not necessary to establish new schools all over the Kingdom in order to separate the children. The industrial schools can afford the necessary separation as the law now stands; of course, I do not speak of aggravated cases of more hardened offenders. Aggravated cases of juvenile offences are not the subject of this Bill at all. They do not come under the provisions of the Industrial Schools Bill, and therefore any recommendations of the Commissioners do not apply to such cases. The Commissioners very fairly state the arguments which came before them in favour of and against this proposition; but there seems to me not to be the slightest reason given for the creation of a new set of schools all over the Kingdom for the class of children they describe in their Report. The class of children referred to—I am quoting from the 35th page of the Commissioners' Report, which recommends the creation of these truant schools—are those "whose only offence has been truancy," with whom are very strangely coupled "those who have been unable from poverty to attend school." They make a distinction between those whom they call actual truants, and those who are truants and something more. Really, my Lords, there is no end to the ingenuity of hobby-mongers. The specialty of a truant school, as stated by the Commissioners to be their meaning of the term, is that they are schools for short detention. The proposal is that truant children shall be kept there for a short time and then licensed to go to the ordinary schools. Would it not be much better to whip them and send them back to school at once? What can be the reason for multiplying schools for such a purpose all over the country? Our expenditure on public elementary schools has already grown to an enormous extent, and I think quite sufficient without extending it in a new way. The good sense of the country upon the matter is shown by the fact that only six of these truant schools have been established throughout the Kingdom; and out of those six the Commissioners have condemned two, leaving only four subject to their approval. They condemned those two on the ground that the treatment in them was a great deal too penal. I saw them myself. As a member of the Commission, I went round the country, and I found that the treatment of children in these truant schools is to confine them to their bedrooms, to reform them by solitary confinement, absence from play, entire deprivation of liberty. This treatment is, I suppose, by way of making school more attractive in the eyes of these truants. I should think, myself, it would have the exactly contrary effect. Your Lordships are not bound by the Report of a Commission, and I hope the House will exercise its own judgment on the recommendation of this Commission. I certainly protest against it. The supposed success of these schools, if there has been any, can be attained just as well in a day industrial school; and if the noble Viscount supports this class of institutions, I hope he will give us a better reason for establishing them than that which is given in the Report. I therefore move the omission of Clause 30.

Amendment moved, "To leave out Clause 30.—(*The Lord Norton.*)

The Earl of RAVENSWORTH: My Lords, I am very glad my noble Friend has moved the omission of this clause. I am sure your Lordships will agree that this Bill raises a question of great importance with regard to many of its provisions. It proposes to constitute a number of entirely new detaining schools. That, I think, is rather a strong measure; and, when we view the proposal in the light of experience, I think it is very objectionable. I will ask your Lordships to permit me to make a few short observations. County Councils and Borough Councils have some reason for objecting to this Bill on the ground of cost. They are now constituted the authorities for the management of truant schools and day industrial schools. There are further provisions, against which I shall have nothing whatever to say, for sending children out to board provided they can find proper persons to receive them and undertake their care. I will now only deal with the two questions of day schools and truant schools. I am very much afraid that one consequence of creating these schools will be the overlapping of authority, causing confusion in their administration, and, further than that, I think it may bring the different authorities who are concerned in these schools into serious conflict on many occasions. But it is not only that I am afraid of. A worse result may occur if the Bill is carried out in its entirety' that of bringing into conflict no less than three different Departments in London. Those who are acquainted with such matters of administration in the country are aware that great difficulties sometimes arise as between two Departments; but if you are to have three to deal with, the Home Office in the first instance, the Local Government Board in the next, and the Educational Department in the third, I am afraid great confusion will arise in the County and Borough Councils if this Bill is carried out in its entirety. Now, my Lords, I want to mention what the feeling is which exists in the country upon these matters. Those of your Lordships who are members of County Councils must, I am sure, regard with jealousy and vigilance every proposal to increase expenditure. If all these schools are to be supported, and compulsorily supported, the cost will be very great. By Clause 26, reading it shortly, every County Council and Borough Council shall, not "may" as hitherto, contribute to the maintenance and management of any industrial school where children are retained by the order of any Court acting within the limits of their authority. In my own county (Durham)—not an unimportant county, and where the necessity for the retention of poor children exists in a very considerable degree—we have gone to the expense of £20,000 in establishing a county industrial school, and I can assure your Lordships that we view this sort of proposal with the greatest possible jealousy. If we are to be compelled to undertake the management of any number of industrial schools which may be set up, we may find our own school, which has been erected at a very large cost, empty, the children having been drawn away to another, and we shall be compelled to support them in other schools to the extent of, I think, a 2s. 6d. rate in each county. We cannot wonder, therefore, that County Councils view these provisions with no great favour. If they think, as they ought to do, that it is their duty to watch expenditure and keep down cost, they will naturally regard such a proposal with great jealousy. I do not want unnecessarily to detain the House at this stage of the Bill, and I think I have said enough to show that it is passing through your Lordships' House without that close scrutiny which I think it ought to receive. That, my Lords, is one of the difficulties which arise when we refer our Bills to the Grand Committees instead of dealing with them in the House. Everything is threshed out there, and your Lordships and the public outside know absolutely nothing of what occurs within the walls of the Committee Rooms. Old Bills are brought forward and passed through, and new Bills are substituted for old Bills, and nothing is known of what has been done in Committee. That fact, my Lords, has been proved by what has occurred within the last few days in the Committee of which I am a member. What I desire to point out here, my Lords, is that we shall be making an expenditure which will be absolutely unnecessary, and which will be viewed with great jealousy and, probably, with considerable hostility; and that, if you overlap authorities in the way the Bill proposes you will have an antagonism of authority where there ought to be cordial co-operation in every Department. I will not detain your Lordships longer, but I do think that is a part of the Bill which should more properly form the subject of a separate measure, because you are now bringing the duties of the Educational Department of this country into opposition in some degree with the work of the County Councils. I am not at all sure that that which is perhaps the most valuable power that we possess as Magistrates, of committing children to these schools, will not be considerably interfered with, and that by this Bill we shall not be largely deprived of that power. Upon that point I will add a very few words. The greatest difficulty we find, and I know that those Members of your Lordships' House who are Magistrates will confirm what I say, and that which requires the most tender handling is the power which is conferred upon us under the compulsory clauses of the Education Acts, and the great lever in our hands in dealing with truancy is this power of committal to industrial schools. That is a very difficult matter to deal with, because it arises from so many causes. It may arise from the necessities of the parents as much as from the fault of the children themselves, and every case ought to be dealt with upon its own merits. If you deprive us of the power I have mentioned, you will find a difficulty if that truancy be continued, because the great fear of the parents is that the children may be committed to the industrial schools with all the consequences of that committal. That power will, I believe, be largely taken away from the Magistrates. I think the powers of the Magistrates will be greatly curtailed by the very fact of the careful definition contained in Clause 10, of the causes for which children may be sent to the schools. If that power which the Magistrates hold *in terrorem* over parents is taken away, you will find very great difficulty in carrying out compulsory education. Considering the importance of the subject, I have ventured to make these few observations; and I think that noble Lords who have served on County Councils, or who have passed a considerable part of their lives in the administration of the law, will attach some weight to what I have said. I can assure your Lordships that there is no Member of this House who, considering the character of this Bill, views it with greater perplexity than myself.

*VISCOUNT CROSS: I do not think it can be said that this Bill has not received consideration at the hands of your Lordships' House. It was brought forward last year and read a second time. It then went back to the Committee on Law, and was very much discussed there. It has gone through the same process again this year. Having been discussed in Committee we are now at the Third Reading, and there has been no objection to the principle of the Bill. I, therefore, do not think I should be in order if I were to go into all the points which have been raised. One observation, however, has been made with regard to the power of sending children to industrial schools. A large number of children have been sent to industrial schools who, in the opinion of competent judges, ought never to have been sent there. We have provided in this Bill that the County Councils shall have a *locus standi* to appear before the Magistrates before the child is committed; so that if they think a child is going to be sent to an industrial school who ought not to be sent there, they may appear and state their objection to the Magistrate. Now, with regard to truant schools, I would only make this observation: that neither the clause about truant schools nor that about day industrial schools is new. They have both been in operation long ago. We have a considerable number of truant schools—six, I believe, altogether—in the United Kingdom, which have now been in operation for a long time, and ten day industrial schools, which have also been in existence for a considerable time. They are not by any means a new class of schools, and the Commissioners have inquired into the circumstances and have reported upon management. It is all very well for my noble Friend Lord Norton to say they do not answer, but from the Report of the Commission we find they do answer exceedingly well. There are six of them established in large towns, including London, Liverpool, Swansea, and Brighton, where, as I have said, they are found to answer extremely well. The Report states that the attendance of the boys at the truant schools has been considerably better than at other schools, as, for instance, under the London County Council. There is no doubt the Royal Commission found fault with the penal discipline in some of the schools, and that the others which have not that penal discipline have produced just as good results. The consequence will be, no doubt, that that penal discipline will be set aside. Judging from the Report, the Royal Commissioners think they have done a great deal of good. I hope, therefore, the noble Lord will not insist upon striking this clause out of the Bill. They simply provide for the continuance of the old system, which has been found by a majority of the Royal Commission to have worked great good down to the present time.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: My Lords, before the Bill passes, will the noble Viscount be kind enough to tell me in which clause power is given to the County Councils to appear before the Magistrates? I see there is a clause relating to notice being given to them, but not with regard to their appearance.

*Viscount CROSS: That clause was put in to enable them to appear before the Justices. That was undoubtedly the intention.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: It struck me that it was desirable there should be precise words to that effect. Perhaps the noble Viscount will look to that.

Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

REFORMATORY SCHOOLS BILL.

(No. 58.)

THIRD READING.

Order of the Day for the Third Reading, read.

Bill read 3ª (according to Order).

*Lord LEIGH: My Lords, I have an Amendment to move upon Clause 9, Sub-section B, that the words "in addition to or" be omitted. The effect of this will be to do away entirely with the preliminary imprisonment of children sent to reformatory schools. I believe I am correct in saying that in no country throughout the world but England is it found necessary, or believed to be necessary, that children should qualify for the reformatory schools by passing through the prisons. I remember 35 years ago accompanying a well-known head of French reformatories, M. de Metz, to discuss the subject with the then Home Secretary, Sir George Grey, and M. de Metz at that time expressed himself strongly against children being sent to prison at all. In every reformatory in England there are registers kept showing the history of all the boys; and if any of your Lordships would refer to those registers, as I have done on many occasions, you would find that something like 75 per cent. of those children have parents who have absolutely and entirely neglected them, and are not fit to have the management of them. And if you would refer, also, to the same register, you will find that when the children leave the schools something like 90 per cent. of those who have passed through the reformatory schools are doing well and earning their livelihood in an honest manner. I think, therefore, it is clear, and I am sure that your Lordships will agree with me in thinking that it is not the fault of these poor children themselves that they have had to go to the reformatory schools, but that they have been really suffering punishment for the faults of their parents. I am convinced that the gaols are not fit places of punishment for children, and I think I may speak with some authority as being an old Visiting Magistrate of my county prison. I have never found that a child who had been passed through the prison was benefited or improved by going there, but that, on the contrary, he left the gaol much worse in character than when he went into it. It is upon those grounds that I strongly object to children being sent to gaol before being sent to a reformatory school. I beg to move the Amendment which stands in my name.

Amendment moved, in Clause 9, Subsection (b.), line 32, to leave out the words "in addition to or."—(*The Lord Leigh.*)

*VISCOUNT CROSS: My Lords, the present Bill differs a good deal from the existing law in one or two respects. Under the existing law it is required that the offender shall undergo a preliminary imprisonment of at least 10 days before going to the reformatory school. It was thought, after inquiry by the Royal Commission, unnecessary to go as far as that and to that extent. I entirely agree with the noble Lord who has just sat down. I am very glad that this provision should be done away with, that it should be necessary to send the child to prison before he went to the reformatory school at all. This Bill, therefore, has been drawn upon different lines, and that proviso making it necessary for the Magistrate to send the child to prison before going to the reformatory is entirely done away with by this Bill. But now the noble Lord wants to go further. The clause to which he objects is in these words—

> "Where a youthful offender is convicted of an offence punishable with penal servitude, or imprisonment, and either appears to the Court to be not less than 14 years of age, or is proved to have been previously convicted of an offence punishable by penal servitude or imprisonment, the Court may, in addition to, or in lieu of, sending him to a reformatory school, send him to prison."

I think, my Lords, that is a very proper power to give to the Magistrates. It seems to me it is quite right they should have that power. The compulsory enactment is done away with, but power is left to the Magistrate, if he thinks it right, to send the offender to prison in addition to the reformatory school—to send him there first. I hope, therefore, the noble Lord's Amendment will not be carried.

Amendment negatived.

*LORD NORTON: My Lords, I have given notice, of an additional clause, the effect of which is this: that where the punishment of children by imprisonment is necessary, it should not be imprisonment in the common gaols, but in places suitable for the purpose. I am supported in that view by the answers to a Circular which has been sent round to all the Petty Sessions in England. I think, also, by the Report upon which this Bill is founded. Now, the addition I want to make to this clause provides for children, if they are imprisoned at all, being sent to "suitable places for the imprisonment of children," which, to my mind, should be a properly fitted lock-up in connection with the police stations attached to every Petty Sessions in the country, or else the Government should provide proper places in the neighbourhood of a few Reformatories in different parts of the Kingdom. That represents no great cost. Aggravated cases of juvenile crime do not come within my proposition. They will, of course, be treated in a different manner from ordinary juvenile offenders. In ordinary cases of juvenile crime imprisonment should not be in a common gaol. I am fortified in that view by the opinion of the Commissioners. If the noble Viscount will refer to the 27th page of the Report of the Commissioners, he will see that the Commissioners give the arguments brought before them in favour of using common prisons for children, and the arguments brought before them, which were much stronger against using common prisons for children. They suggest that all punishment of children should be short, sharp, and apart from the subsequent schooling. The argument against using common prisons for the purpose of a great number of witnesses was that the system was mischievous, that it deprived the gaol of all its terrors as a means of punishment, tended to harden and corrupt young offenders by inevitable contact with older criminals, cast a permanent taint upon their characters, often preventing them from obtaining employment, and added to the difficulties of their restoration to a respectable life. Those are very strong reasons, my

Lords, against sending young children to a common gaol. The arguments the other way, in favour of sending young offenders to prison, are confined to only aggravated cases of juvenile crime, which, as I say, do not come within the purview of this Bill at all. Therefore, those arguments are not directed against my proposition at all. As I have said, the whole weight of the Commissioners' opinion is that imprisonment is not a proper punishment for young children, at least not in a common gaol. It is the opinion, also, of the Commissioners that in the great majority of ordinary offences committed by boys whipping is altogether a far better punishment than imprisonment. But if imprisonment is the sentence passed by the Magistrate, then there should be suitable places provided for it. That is the whole proposition that I have to make to your Lordships, and I hope that the noble Viscount may be willing to accept the addition to this clause which I propose.

Amendment moved,

After Clause 9, insert as a new Clause: "No such youthful offender, except in case of aggravated crime, shall be punished by confinement in a common gaol; but, if sentenced to imprisonment, shall be kept ln a lock-up connected with the Petty Sessions where he has been sentenced, until a suitable place of confinement be found for him connected with some certified reformatory."—(*The Lord Norton.*)

THE EARL OF RAVENSWORTH: My Lords, I have no doubt the House entirely sympathises with my noble Friend in his desire not to subject children even for a probationary period, by whatever name the punishment may be called, to the contamination of a prison. But I want to know where these places are to be found. At present they do not exist. And I want also to know when a child is ordered to be shut up and is not to be let out for a certain period what is he to do? He may be there for seven or 14 days; and I should like to know who is to look after him during that time? I venture to think there may be other places than a prison where a child may be detained and looked after, where he can be punished without the necessity of being contaminated by being sent to prison. The law requires that a child who is to be sent to prison must be sentenced first, but to enact that a child must not go to prison, but to some other place, before you know that such other place exists, or arrange for what the child is to do, or who is to take care of him when he is sent there, is, I must say, rather wild legislation.

*LORD NORTON: If your Lordships will allow me, I should like to point out that the proposal to imprison for short terms young children in lock-ups is not a new thing. It is done at the present time in Scotland; and if such places are not to be found I propose that the Government should make the necessary provision at police stations, or connected with some few reformatory schools themselves.

*THE EARL OF POWIS: My Lords, I think it very undesirable that youthful offenders should be kept for an indefinite time in lock-ups. There are a great many police stations and lock-ups where there is no suitable accommodation for children, and where there would be nobody to look after them. The noble Lord who moves this Amendment speaks of having special lock-ups constructed in certain places to be used for this purpose, but this clause would confine the imprisonment to the particular lock-ups connected with the Petty Sessions where the child was sentenced. The "suitable places" which he proposes do not exist, because places of that kind which do exist are used merely for keeping adult prisoners at the present time for a day or two until they can be removed to the county gaol. It might very well be that a week or 10 days might elapse before the child could be sent to the reformatory school which the county is connected with, or subscribes to, and as a considerable delay might take place before he could be so got rid of, it would be necessary that there should be some one to take care of him. Therefore, my Lords, I think it would be very undesirable that a child should be kept in a lock-up which was certainly not built or intended for the purpose of keeping children in confinement for any considerable time.

*VISCOUNT CROSS: My Lords, I have already pointed out to your Lordships that it is only under certain circumstances that the Magistrates would ever think of sending children to prison; they would not do so if they could possibly help it, unless they were compelled. But when a child is sent to prison, he must have the protection which the prison laws give him. When the children are in prison they are protected by the law, and it is the duty of the prison officials to see that proper precautions are taken in respect of their health, clothing, and food. When we come to these imaginary places which, according to the noble Lord's suggestion, are to be built at some time or other at somebody's expense—I do not know whose—I cannot imagine what security we shall get that proper discipline would be enforced, and that the children would have that protection which a prison affords under the Prison Acts, Acts which have been very carefully drawn. The noble Lord quoted the evidence which is given on page 27 of the Report of the Commissioners, but he entirely forgot, I think, the object for which the Commissioners quoted that evidence. It is for this reason: They say that on no subject are prison managers more unanimous in opinion than in regard to the conviction and imprisonment of children being sent to the schools. I must ask the House, therefore, not to accept this Amendment, because I think that, in the interests of the children themselves, it would be an extremely hard measure.

THE EARL OF RAVENSWORTH: I am very sorry to trouble the House so often, but I should like to say a few words on Clause 22. It is only two or three days ago that I presented a very important Petition from the Mayor and Corporation of Chichester against this clause. That clause makes it for the first time compulsory upon every County Council and every Borough Council to contribute to the expenses of management of every such school, at the rate of not less than 2s. 6d. per week. Up to this time these contributions have been optional, and I want to know very much, from the noble Viscount, what are the grounds upon which that optional payment has now been converted into a compulsory subscription. This is a very serious amount, as it involves a large amount of expenditure for the purposes to which your Lordships are asked to give your sanction. I, therefore, hope there may be some reason given for that which has hitherto been an optional payment being now made compulsory. I would call attention to the fact that in all the other clauses it is stated that the County Councils "may" do so and so, but in this particular clause the little word "shall" which is introduced in substitution for it, is very potent indeed.

*VISCOUNT CROSS: I may explain that this is practically an arrangement with the Treasury, which, I think, would be to the advantage of the County Councils. They gave up their right as between the Councils and themselves *inter se* to the contributions from the parents, and, therefore, they say they think it right that they should have the power to make these payments compulsory. The matter was considerably discussed in Committee. By the arrangement with the Treasury, the sums of money contributed by the parents, which used to go to the Treasury, are given up, and this charge was substituted.

Amendment negatived.

Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS BILL.
(No. 96.)

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) (PLEURO-PNEUMONIA) BILL.—(No. 105.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

*THE EARL OF JERSEY: My Lords, in asking your Lordships to give a Second Reading of this Bill, I must claim your indulgence while I endeavour to point out what are its leading objects and scope. I need not detain your Lordships with any lengthened explanation of the great danger and loss which accrue not only to the owners of cattle but to the public generally from the spread of pleuro-pneumonia. At the present moment the various Local Authorities in the country have the carrying out of the Act of 1878, and of the several Orders dealing with this disease. A want of uniformity of action has not infrequently arisen by which the energy of one Local Authority has been set at naught through the supineness of another. There has been also considerable hesitation in slaughtering cattle at the right moment, and, consequently, the disease has been allowed to spread, and there have been outbreaks, which might have been prevented, owing to cattle affected with pleuro-pneumonia, and which ought to have been slaughtered, being allowed to come in contact with other animals, and those animals which had been in contact with affected animals being permitted to be sold. It was found necessary, in 1888, to issue a further Order, by which cattle which had been in contact with animals affected with pleuro-pneumonia were ordered to be slaughtered, compensation to the amount of three-fourths of the value of an animal actually affected with the disease, and the full value of animals slaughtered because they had been in contact with affected animals, was ordered to be paid. That compensation had to be paid by the Local Authorities. Notwithstanding the Order of 1888—whether it was owing to the want of uniformity among the various Authorities or to the concealment of existing disease, or to the movement of affected cattle to and from the fairs and markets throughout the country, no effectual result has been obtained. There is also great force in the argument that this compulsory slaughter of cattle is carried out for the general good, and, therefore, that it is reasonable the public should bear a share in paying the compensation required. Unfortunately, in the month of May last there was a considerable increase in the number of outbreaks of pleuro-pneumonia. There were no less than 57 in May, as compared with 25 in April last, and 33 in the corresponding month of May last year. Therefore, I think it is clear that, unless stringent measures are taken at once, we run a considerable risk of this disease taking a firm hold of the country, in which case our difficulties would be very great. The President of the Board of Agriculture, seeing the necessity of decided action, has determined to grapple with this disease in the most effective way that Parliament will allow, and that is by taking over the executive power from the various Local Authorities, and exercising it himself. But this action naturally involves the payment of compensation by the Government, upon the principle that "whoever kills must pay." I can well understand that we should be very chary of depriving Local Authorities of any powers they may have, but it is quite clear it would never do for the Local Authority to slaughter and the Government to pay, neither would the Local Authority agree that the Government should slaughter and that they should pay. Unfortunately, it is only too true that there has been, and probably is, a great deal of concealment of this disease; and I quite agree with what fell from the noble Lord, Earl Spencer, the other day, on the great difficulty which Local Authorities meet with in tracing out the causes of an outbreak, and even in searching places where the disease is supposed to exist. Under this Bill, therefore, greater powers of inspection are taken. By the 1st clause it is enacted that the Board of Agriculture shall cause all cattle which are affected with pleuro-pneumonia to be slaughtered, and it may also, if it thinks fit to do so, cause any cattle which have been in contact with affected cattle to be slaughtered. The words dealing with the question of contact are purposely made very wide, because it has been found in the past that in many cases animals which have been not very far from affected animals have not been slaughtered at the time, but have been sent away, and after a short time they have fallen victims to the disease, and have become themselves centres of contagion. It is hoped that in this way the Government will have a clear hand in dealing with cattle which have been thus in contact with diseased animals. Then it is enacted that the old rate of compensation shall be paid, and provision is made for the appointment of additional Inspectors. By the help of those Inspectors it is hoped that the Board will be able to trace the disease better than can at the present moment be done by the Local Authorities, who, after all, cannot trace the disease beyond the limit of their own jurisdiction. Then, by the next clause, with regard to the funds, there is £140,000 allocated for the purpose of carrying out the Acts as regards Great Britain, and if there shall be in any year a deficiency it is provided that it shall be made up out of the Local Taxation funds. But it is hoped there will be no occasion to do that. Then

Clause 3 orders that the Inspectors of the Local Authorities shall, in addition to the powers and duties they now have, report immediately any case of pleuro-pneumonia to the Board of Agriculture. The effect of this will be that, the moment the Board is made acquainted with an outbreak, they will send down their own Inspector, they will themselves take the case in hand, and will carry out the provisions of the law. Then Clause 4 gives more power to the Inspectors. At the present moment an Inspector, when he goes into a place or shed where he has reason to think there may be disease existing, but concealed, has to give his reasons in writing. Under this clause the Inspectors will have power to enter into any shed or place where they have reason in their own minds to think there is concealment of disease, and to act at once without any let or hindrance. The 5th clause applies to Ireland. I need only say that the sum of £20,000 is allotted to Ireland, and the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council there take the place of the Board of Agriculture here. Clause 6 deals with the accounts. Clause 9 gives the 1st September as the date on which it is proposed that this Act shall come into operation. I have endeavoured, my Lords, briefly to point out to the House the chief points of this Bill, which may be summarised under three heads or principles; the substitution of a Central Authority in place of many Local Authorities, in order to secure uniformity of action; the consequent payment of compensation out of the Imperial funds, in order that the cost of carrying out an object which is for the public good shall not fall entirely upon the local funds; and, lastly, the increased stringency of inspection, in order that concealment of disease may be more easily detected. I feel sure that these principles will meet with the approval of the House, for your Lordships will agree that the safety and soundness of our herds is not merely a matter of individual advantage, but of great national importance. But if the State comes forward to help in this matter may we not look to agriculturalists and others in the country to lend their aid. A measure of this kind can only be successfully worked with the assistance of the public. It cannot be carried out solely by the care and firmness of the Central Authorities, but much will depend on the manner in which it is supported throughout the country. I have said that our great danger is the concealment of the disease. The policy of the pole-axe has succeeded in the Netherlands, and there is no reason to suppose that it will not succeed in this country if the Authorities are supported by public opinion and public spirit. The Board of Agriculture will have to rely greatly on the sympathetic action of the Local Authorities, especially in the first instance, and their knowledge and advice must always be most valuable. Some time will elapse before this Act comes into operation, and it is important that there should be energy shown between now and the 1st September next. Unless stringent efforts are made to stamp out every outbreak which may occur we may have to regret a very serious spread of the disease, and of course our difficulties and expense will, in that case, be enormously increased. But I am quite sure that we shall meet with the assistance of those who do not always give support to our measures, like the noble Earl opposite, whose experience and authority is so great in these matters, and that they will assist us in our endeavours to remove a dark spot, which seems to threaten the somewhat more hopeful prospects of agriculture at the present time. I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY: My Lords, I am sure the thanks, not only of your Lordships' House, but also of every one who is interested in agriculture in this country, are due to the Government for having brought in this Bill. The only word of complaint that I have heard in connection with it, is that, in one single point, it does not go far enough, and the only observations I shall have to make to your Lordships will be upon that point. The noble Earl who has moved the Second Reading of the Bill, said very truly that the danger of the spread of pleuro-pneumonia, and the loss we have suffered from it throughout the country, has been from unsystematic management, and from failure in administering the law. If the Local Authority in one county has adopted one way of carrying it out, another Local Authority in an adjoining county has put a different interpretation altogether upon the law. I could give your Lordships an extraordinary instance which only occurred last month of the way in which the law is regarded in some places. I quote from a newspaper giving the incident, which occurred in a neighbouring county to my own, the county of Forfarshire. It states that—

> "It was reported that pleuro-pneumonia had broken out at a farm in Carse Gowrie, among a herd of cattle valued at £2,000. Nine of them had been killed by order of the Local Government Authority; the authorities directed that 20 more should be brought into Forfar for sale on Monday, and that the remainder should be sold in lots."

I believe, my Lords, that this actually took place; that 80 cattle out of 101 cattle, contaminated by contact with others suffering from pleuro-pneumonia, were actually sold, and allowed to disseminate and act as centres of disease, and whoever has bought them, now has in them centres of infection. That is the way in which some counties carry out the law, and we have found that in the county with which I am connected, where we work the Act according to the Orders of Privy Council, we could not contend with the opposite system which other counties chose to adopt. The necessity, in my opinion, and in the opinion of those who have been working this Act in the past, is that the power of the Inspectors should be strengthened for the purpose of finding out existing cases, or detecting cases of concealment of the disease. The noble Earl took credit for Clause 4, which enables the Inspector to enter without notice in writing, which has hitherto been necessary, into any shed or place where he suspects the disease exists. That is very well as far as it goes, and is no doubt a great improvement; but the great difficulty we have in carrying out the Act is in Clauses 66 to 78 with regard to penalties for offences. Under those provisions the owner of a diseased animal must take all practicable means of giving notice of this disease, and as the matter stands we have found in Aberdeenshire that we cannot get a conviction under the Act. A dairyman finds he has a cow suffering from pleuro. Well, he has nothing to do but to palm off this diseased cow upon some other dairyman, or some innocent farmer who comes into the market, and so that animal goes forth into another part of the country, and soon afterwards there is an outbreak of pleuro-pneumonia. We have tried time after time to secure convictions, but because, under the Act, the man who has caused the mischief is able to plead that he was not aware of the presence of the disease, or that the animal was affected, and that he took all practicable means of giving notice, we are unable to obtain a conviction. I shall therefore venture to move in Committee a new clause, providing that any person who neglects to give notice to the Local Authority or to the Inspector shall be liable for expenses under Clauses 60 to 66. That would put the onus upon the owner of the diseased animal, and it would put an end to the system of concealment which has been the cause why this disease has not been extirpated long ago. There is one other point I should like to mention. The noble Earl has not said enough, I think, with regard to the value of this measure in one direction, and that is to the owners of pedigree cattle. The existence of pleuro-pneumonia in this country has greatly depreciated the value of that kind of stock, and has entirely excluded it from the foreign market; because the knowledge that the disease exists in this country prevents us from selling to the foreigner, and the best market which was open to owners in this country, that is the foreign market, is therefore closed against us. I shall therefore venture to move the Amendments of which I have given notice.

*EARL SPENCER: My Lords, I am sorry to have to trouble your Lordships with a few remarks on this subject, but I am afraid it has been my fate to have been very much mixed up with subjects connected with diseases of cattle, and I am therefore anxious to say a few words on this very important measure which my noble Friend Lord Jersey has introduced to your Lordships' House. I confess I think it is rather a reflection on veterinary science that no remedy has been found for a disease of this kind. I know that the veterinary schools of this country have greatly improved of late, and that there are many able men who are devoted to their profession connected with them. At the same time, I think it must be admitted that it is a reflection upon scientific bodies that the only way of getting rid of a terrible and disastrous disease is the use of the pole axe. My Lords, I am afraid we must admit, according to all experience in this and other countries, that there is no safe remedy for this dangerous and disastrous disease, and all the best authorities declare that the only way of getting rid of it from a country is to slaughter not only all the animals affected with the disease, but all animals that have been in contact with them. I, therefore, my Lords, am strongly in favour of a serious effort being made in this country to get rid of the disease. I daresay your Lordships have seen an interesting Report of the Departmental Committee on this subject. Those who have read that Report will see that it bears strong evidence to the necessity of some central action. The noble Earl has very well put the reasons why central action is necessary. It is necessary, because Local Authorities in various parts of the country, even some of the very best Local Authorities, are afraid of charging the rates with the heavy expenditure which would be entailed if they carried out thoroughly the orders of the Privy Council under this Act by the slaughter of many valuable cattle. I know that many of those authorities have doubts as to the efficacy of the measure: but the great inducement to them to hesitate is the heavy expenditure that would be thrown on their county if they slaughtered a large number of cattle that have been in contact with diseased cattle, and it has been said very truly that while one county may be very stringent in carrying out the Orders in Council another may be very lax. The noble Marquess quoted a case which certainly would be a perfect scandal if he is correctly informed as to what occurred upon a farm in Forfar, and I think that some steps might well be taken with regard to what was done by the owners of the cattle in sending those animals to market. But, my Lords, I think, as the noble Earl said very truly, there is justification for coming on Imperial funds for this compensation, because the benefit derived is a benefit to the whole community, and not only to the particular locality, which, although the greatest possible care may have been exercised, may still have the misfortune to have the disease introduced into it. Therefore, I think there is justification for the Central Authority intervening and taking charge of this very grave matter. Now I wish to say with regard to this Bill what struck me, when the measure was first introduced, was that I should have preferred to see it framed in a different way. I should have preferred to see the Local Authorities charged with a certain amount of the cost of carrying out the orders. That, I believe, was the system in vogue in Ireland, where half was paid by the Central Authority and half by the Local Authority. It is very true, as my noble Friend says, that the power of ordering the slaughter ought to be with those who pay the rate. It is very difficult for the Central Government Department to intervene when a Local Authority is lax in carrying out the order for slaughter for which they have afterwards wholly to pay. I heartily agree with my noble Friend in that respect. But if the Central Authority pays half I think it would have a right to intervene and call upon the Local Authority to slaughter. I am aware that there is considerable difficulty in the matter, and perhaps the noble Earl or some Member of the Government will say whether there is any very great objection felt to this method of providing the compensation. This method of carrying out the compensation which I have in my mind would have this advantage: that it would induce the Local Authority to be very much more careful with regard to the administration of the Sanitary Laws and Regulations in reference to infection among cattle. They would be much more careful with regard to the Regulations they make, whereas I very much fear that if the Local Authorities find that the compensation is to come out of Imperial funds some of them might be very careless in their administration in that respect. Then there is another point to be remembered, another objection, and it is this: that if, unfortunately, this disease becomes spread over the country the Central Board will have immense difficulty in carrying out the execution of the order. I know that in the case of cattle plague, when it was introduced into the country not many years ago, the Central Authority were able to check it without difficulty; but then the disease was at a minimum and was confined within a small space. But if this disease is spread all over the country and appears in every county throughout Great Britain I am afraid the Central Authority will have very great difficulty in seeing that the orders are carried out without the assistance of the Local Authorities. I think I should myself have preferred to have seen the Local Authority invested with the power of carrying out the orders. In that way the position of the Central Authority would be very much strengthened, because, if they found that the Local Authority failed in their duty in carrying out the orders, they would receive general support in issuing the most stringent orders from head-quarters. The noble Lord was good enough to refer to some remarks which I made at the Royal Agricultural Society the other day. I certainly did think it my duty to speak strongly before that body on the subject, and I stated that one of the matters of the greatest possible difficulty was to trace the origin of the disease. We have, unfortunately, had lately seven outbreaks in Northamptonshire, and in all of them the mischief has been traced to one day at Northampton Market, and, I believe, to some shed-cows coming from London dairies. We have had the greatest possible difficulty in endeavouring to trace these animals, and I sat myself for five hours one day for the sole purpose of trying to trace out those animals. We never got near the tract in regard to four of the cows, because in every one of those cases the dealers absolutely refused to say whence they had obtained their cattle; but in the fifth case where we thought we had traced the matter out we were not able to run the fox to ground, because at the last moment the information broke down and we were unable to trace the cases to an actual pleuro-pneumonia centre. I believe, my Lords, the Central Authority will be able to trace the disease much more effectually than the Local Authorities, and, therefore, I welcome the Bill on that account alone. But there is another point, and a very serious one. It is this, that unless the Central Authority have the most stringent powers I am afraid they will not succeed in carrying out the desired object. I am aware that there is a very great interest connected with this part of the subject, I mean the dairy interest. I have a great regard for that interest, and I feel that it must be respected and not unduly interfered with. At the same time I feel convinced that it is from the cow-sheds in large towns that this great evil principally arises, and that we must look to them as the source of this disease. In London, and throughout Great Britain, it is the habit of dairymen to kill their cows or to send them for slaughter after they cease to be of value for milking purposes. But in Dublin, which is another centre, a different system prevails. There the system of the dairymen is to send out the young stock which they breed in the spring, and they become centres of infection when sent through the country round Dublin. I remember when I went to Dublin in 1869-70 I used to see every spring in Phœnix Park centres of pleuro-pneumonia from the presence of young cows which had been sent out from Dublin. I may mention that I lost 15 cows in one case in that way myself; but we were able to check that to a great extent, though there was enormous loss, because we insisted on the authorities of the park very strictly refusing to admit any cattle at all without a licence. I am afraid the practice I refer to still exists, and I think it will add greatly to the difficulty of stamping out the disease in Dublin. In London, and other large towns, it will certainly be in the interest of all honest traders in the dairies to try and stamp out this disease. I very much fear that merely giving powers of inspection will not be sufficient; and I cannot help thinking that before long either the Board of Agriculture, by Order in Council, will be obliged to prohibit the sending out from large towns of shed-cows during the operation of stamping out the disease, or some other step will have to be taken to check the outflow from these large dairies. I know it has been said that Local Authorities have power to defend themselves against these dairies; but I think this mode of defence is very inefficacious. We thought in Northamptonshire that we might prohibit the importation of animals from London during the outbreak of pleuro-pneumonia; but we found that cattle from London were smuggled into some other county where there was no disease, and that unless we prohibited altogether the importation of cattle into the county we could not secure ourselves against the importation of these cows. I cannot help thinking it would be to their own interest for the dairy trade to agree to strong restrictions, and that for their own sake they will make some sacrifice. If they do not, then sooner or later, if this measure is to be carried out throughout the country, some stringent order from London with regard to these cows which spread the disease will have to be made. I do not believe there will be any great sacrifice required, because nearly all these animals are fit for the butcher. They are only bought for grazing, and the increased price which may be obtained by sending them into the country would probably be inconsiderable. I do not know what answer the Government may be disposed to make to that suggestion or to another proposition that has been made in certain quarters for branding these diseased shed-cows. I think it would be very desirable before the discussion closes that we should hear a statement from the Government of their views with regard to that matter. In all measures of a rather heroic kind it is absolutely necessary to be strong enough. Half measures will always fail. I therefore should advocate, during the time the Minister of Agriculture has these powers in his hands, the adoption of the strongest possible methods for arriving at the source of disease and getting rid of it. I know that some people think the disease is so insidious and is concealed so long in these animals that it is almost impossible to get rid of it. I do not believe that we shall get rid of it in a short time; but if we firmly and strongly carry out these orders I do not see why we should not succeed in getting rid of it, just as they did in the Netherlands. There that was absolutely done, though even in that small country the disease went on for several years before they succeeded in stamping it out. I most sincerely hope that the Minister of Agriculture, whoever he may be, will be successful in the great task the Government has undertaken. It is not an easy task, and the country must not be disappointed if it takes some years before any wide or satisfactory result from this legislation is forthcoming.

*THE DUKE OF RICHMOND AND GORDON: My Lords, being of a somewhat consistent turn of mind, I hail with the greatest satisfaction the Bill under discussion. I say this because more than three years ago, when addressing a meeting of farmers in Sussex, in discussing the subject of pleuro-pneumonia, I suggested that the only way of getting rid of this terrible disease was for the Government to take the matter into its own hands, order the slaughter of the animals, and pay compensation for the cattle so slaughtered. I believe that is the only way of stamping out the disease and getting rid of it altogether. I have been the more induced to come to this conclusion from the experience I had in 1877, at the time of the outbreak of the cattle plague in this country, of the result of the stringent measures which we then took. I am not quite sure that we were altogether justified in what we did, but in a very short time we stamped out the disease. I quite agree with my noble Friend Earl Spencer that the two cases are not exactly parallel, that is to say the cattle-plague at that time was confined to a very small area, this Metropolis and the adjacent part of the country only, whereas now we have to deal with a much more extended area of disease, pleuro-pneumonia having been developed over, I think I might almost say, the whole of the country. Therefore, though in 1877 it did not take so very long a time to get rid of the cattle plague, we cannot hope to eradicate pleuro-pneumonia in as short a period as was sufficient on that occasion. I am perfectly sure that the only way of getting rid of the disease is by stamping it out by the process which will be put in action by this Bill. I quite agree in what my noble Friend stated, that it is very desirable to have uniformity of action. That point was referred to by Lord Huntly. He said, very truly, that it was desirable that should be secured, because where one authority may put in force stringent measures under the Act their energetic action was probably neutralised by the way in which an adjoining county carried them out, and I hope this Bill will have a good effect in that direction. The noble Lord also said the Bill does not go far enough. I should have liked to hear in what manner he wished to extend the operation of this Act. The noble Earl stated that many persons have been in the habit of concealing diseased animals upon their premises, but I would point out that that is an offence against the law as it stands at present. In the 31st section of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, 41 and 42 Vict., cap. 94, it is provided by Sub-section 1 that—

> "Every person having in his possession or under his charge an animal affected with disease shall, as far as practicable, keep that animal separate from animals not so affected, and shall, with all practicable speed, give notice of the fact of the animal being so affected to a police constable for the district, county, borough, town, or place, wherein the animal is"

which is so affected; and then, later on, by the 60th section of the Act it is enacted that

> "Any person guilty of offences against this Act is liable"

to certain penalties. So that, at this moment, it is contrary to the law for people to keep diseased animals on their premises when they are aware of the fact that the animals are diseased without giving notice. I do not go quite as far as my noble Friend opposite Earl Spencer in saying that these dairy cows should be branded. I doubt whether, in this country, it would be possible to carry out that suggestion. One of the evils now that we have to contend with is that, when a dairyman has a cow which he finds is not likely to be of much more use to him in the milking way, or finds that it is not in the best of health, he sends it away to——

*EARL SPENCER: I did not make the suggestion which my noble Friend mentions on my own part; what I intended to say was, that it was one of the suggestions which had been thrown out, and I think we ought to hear what is to be said against it.

*THE DUKE OF RICHMOND AND GORDON: My answer is that I think it would not be practicable in this country to brand all dairy cows. But the clause in the Bill which I set great store by is Clause 4, and that clause goes further than my noble Friend suggested. It gives power to the Inspector to enter and examine any cowshed, land, or other place. It is not that there is no such power at all now, but the Bill extends the power possessed at present, and gives in fact unlimited power to the Inspector to inspect. Clause 4 says—

> "For the purpose of ascertaining whether pleuro-pneumonia exists in any cowshed, land, or other place, an Inspector of the Board of Agriculture may enter such shed, land or place."

He may enter whenever he pleases and without giving notice, and I think that is an enormous advantage over the law as it stands at present. Then, when the Inspector has gone into these sheds, land, or dairies, wherever the cows may be, his duty would be then to report to the Minister of Agriculture, and if, by the Report, it is brought to the notice of the Minister of Agriculture that the disease exists in any particular place, he will compel the slaughter of the animal so affected. Therefore, it gives an unlimited power to the Minister of Agriculture to ascertain whether the disease exists if it is suspected to exist; and, secondly it gives him power to order the slaughter of the animals, compensating the party to whom the animals belong. That is a very strong power, but I do not think it is too strong to meet the danger of another outbreak of this terrible disease. I trust, and I believe, that the Local Authorities will in future act in concert with the Department of Agriculture, and endeavour to discover any cases of disease in their own immediate neighbourhood; and I think that they are much more likely to do it when they know that animals that are diseased, and have to be slaughtered, will be compensated for by the Government, than at present, when it appears to be to the interest of everybody to conceal the existence of disease, and not to have animals killed for which compensation must be paid in the way now provided for. My Lords, I think the united action, or partly united action, which my noble Friend has suggested, of the Local Authority having part power and the Government having part power, would be not a wise proceeding. I think the whole responsibility should be left in the hands of the Government to stamp out the disease, and pay for the loss of cattle in doing it; and, if firmly carried out, I believe the passing of this Bill into an

Act will be one of the greatest boons to the agricultural community that we have seen for many years.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I may be, perhaps, excused for saying a few words, as I am connected with the agricultural County of Norwich, where, unfortunately, agriculturists have suffered seriously from this disease of pleuro-pneumonia. We are there, unfortunately, particularly exposed to it, because our mode of conducting business requires that, as farmers, we should buy a number of store cattle, which bring, in a great measure, this terrible disease to this country from Ireland. There does exist among us a very strong belief that this disease is, to a great extent, propagated from Ireland. Now, I do not say I assent to that at all upon any evidence which I possess, but I mention the fact in order to justify the inquiry which I addressed to the Government as to what has been going on in Ireland latterly in regard to this important subject. I see from the Report of the Commissioners—made about two years ago, I believe — that an extensive slaughter of cattle took place in Dublin. No less than 1,486 animals were slaughtered, and 530 of those animals were found to be diseased. Now, Dublin was, in my time, when I was Lord Lieutenant, a perfect hot-bed of disease, as it also was during the term of office of my noble Friend Earl Spencer, and I cannot consider anything more important in getting rid of this disease than that the Government should continue to enforce in the most vigorous manner the stamping out of this disease in Dublin. With regard to Ireland generally, I have no personal experience of the mode in which these Acts are carried into effect; but from the nature of the country, and the manner in which the animals are kept, I should anticipate a great deal more difficulty in enforcing the orders of the Local Authorities in Ireland than in this country. If that be so, I welcome this Bill as giving to the Government more complete powers of dealing with the disease. What I desire to impress upon the Government is that we in England expect they will use these powers in Ireland vigorously and effectually; because, with a large number of cattle coming from Ireland, all our exertions and sacrifices in money will be of no avail whatever unless the most stringent measures are taken in Ireland to deal with the disease there. My Lords, there are undoubtedly some persons who doubt the efficacy of this measure for stamping out the disease. One cannot help feeling some apprehension upon the subject, but I quite concur with the Government in thinking that a vigorous effort should be made to deal with it. Above all things, half measures are useless. They merely distress agriculturists and cause a waste of public money without attaining any practical result. If the thing is to be done, it should be done once for all vigorously, and thoroughly persevered in; and if it should turn out that we cannot effect our object, we shall have done our best. But we shall never effect it by adopting half measures, and by one country doing one thing and another another. Therefore, my Lords, I think the Government deserve praise for having, to use an agricultural expression, "taken the bull by the horns," and having themselves resolved to deal with the matter. There is one point which is greatly exercising the minds of many persons, and it is mentioned in this Report, namely, the "old cases." In old cases there may be found instances of the extraordinary length of time which the disease appears to take to incubate. It does seem extraordinary to many people that the disease should break out among a herd after the animals have been isolated for several months, and have never apparently been exposed to contact with diseased cattle at all. That seems to have given rise to the opinion which prevails in the minds of some agriculturists that the disease may spring up spontaneously without any contagion. I do not pretend myself to speak with any scientific authority in the matter, but I think such cases may be explained on the theory that cysts had formed in the lungs of the cattle affected; that is to say, that an animal may have had the disease in a slight form and became nearly cured without the disease having been noticed; the diseased part becomes healed over, and the animal may be perfectly well apparently for months. It then, perhaps, takes cold; that breaks the cyst which had formed in the lungs, and makes the animal at once evidently diseased. That seems to be the explanation of the extraordinary length of time at which, after cattle had been exposed to contagion, they become affected with the disease. I mention the subject because many agriculturists are apprehensive that the disease may break out of itself on account of the great length of time at which, after isolation, it breaks out; but if this explanation is the true one, it will set at rest those doubts. It is extremely important that any doubts of that kind should be dispelled, because unless we can convince the agricultural community that they should give us their hearty co-operation in carrying the measure into effect we shall fail. I quite agree with what has been said by the Marquess of Huntly in reference to penalties. In the case, for instance, of large dairies, if a man is not disposed to give notice, the amount of money which he has at stake in the dairy and the loss which he will certainly incur, even though he receives compensation, are so large that he may be inclined to evade the law. I do not believe that any penalty you can impose will prevent his doing that, and I do not think you should trust to penalties alone. What we want to do is to diffuse correct information on the subject, and by obtaining general co-operation from everybody interested in the matter, we shall be enabled to stamp out this disease which has inflicted more grievous loss on agriculturists.

THE EARL OF RAVENSWORTH: I should like to ask the noble Earl who is to allocate the Compensation Fund which is to be devoted by the country for the purpose of paying for the cattle slaughtered? I ask in reference to the allocation to the various counties. We have heard from noble Lords of outbreaks in some of our counties, and I may mention that there has been a very serious outbreak in my own county. I should like to know whether it is to be on the principle of "first come first served." It might be that a very large sum would be required for a single county, and I only want to know who is to allocate it, and upon what principle. At the same time, I, too, should like to add my humble thanks to the Government for having dealt with this question in so efficient a manner. My noble Friend opposite has, I think, done great service with his great knowledge of the subject in having pointed out the difficulties that any Government will meet with in grappling with this disease. My noble Friend the Earl of Kimberley has told the House that which is no doubt perfectly true, that one of the greatest of those difficulties will arise from the length of time which is occupied in the incubation of the disease in the animals. Whatever amount of inspection you practise, you may send the cleverest man in the country, and I defy him to tell you, unless there are present the outward symptoms, how long it may be before the disease breaks out. No man can blame a farmer for parting with his animals, and weeks after they have been sent away the disease may break out among them. I am very glad that my noble Friend the Earl of Kimberley has really hit the right nail on the head in what he has said. He has explained the difficulty which even an army of Inspectors will find in taking necessary steps for the purpose of carrying out the measure. There is no doubt that the great foci of disease are these sheds in the neighbourhood of great towns; and the difficulty of finding out whether they are infected or not, will be met, and perhaps largely met, by the increased powers of inspection given; but no amount of inspection, from the very nature of the disease, will absolutely protect you, and, therefore, the country must not expect that we shall be enabled to stamp out the evil within a very short time. I hope the noble Earl will inform me how the money is to be allocated, and upon what principle.

*LORD WENLOCK: I sincerely hope the Government will not be induced to act upon the suggestion thrown out by Earl Spencer, namely, that the compensation should be provided between Her Majesty's Government and the Local Authorities. I was surprised to hear him make that statement, because I should have thought his experience would have proved to him that any arrangement, which required communication between the Local Authorities and the Government, might cause delay, which would give time for the disease to spread itself all over the country. I hope the Government will at least be firm and stick to their guns on this occasion. I hail with satisfaction the fact that they have at last determined to grapple with this disease, and I think the country will very much regret if the Government recede from the position they have taken up in the matter. I beg to thank them for bringing forward this measure, and I sincerely hope it may meet with the success it deserves.

*LORD BELPER: I should like to ask a question upon one small point, and that is with regard to the date when the Act comes into force. The Bill fixes that date as the 1st September. Supposing an outbreak occurred in the latter days of August, and was reported, and the slaughter of the animals did not take place till after the date fixed, that is to say, if the animals were not slaughtered before the 1st September, I should like to ask whether the compensation would be paid by the Local Authority or by the Government? It is a very small matter to the Government, but it would be a very large one to the Local Authority which might have ordered the cattle to be slaughtered. In the one case there might be an inducement for keeping back any information in order that the date of slaughter might fall after the 1st of September. I venture to put that question in case the noble Lord has not thought of the point.

*THE EARL OF JERSEY: Several questions have been asked, and, in endeavouring to answer them I think the House will understand that I must speak with some reserve and no authority upon these matters. First, with regard to the questions of the noble Lord opposite, I can only say that I should think the Board would desire to act in a liberal spirit. Beyond that I cannot go. There is no question of allocating this sum between the various Local Authorities, but the Board of Agriculture will have £140,000 allotted to it by Parliament, and it will use that money for the purpose of meeting the cost of every outbreak which may occur. If the expenditure should be more than £140,000 in any year, the Board will meet the deficiency out of the Local Taxation Accounts. Each case will be met by full payment out of these funds. With regard to the suggestions of the noble Lords the Earl of Kimberley and Earl Spencer, I may say that the Board of Agriculture is not responsible for what takes place in Ireland. They have no jurisdiction in that country; but I will endeavour to find out before we go into Committee what is being done there. Then, with regard to the question of inspection of dairies, I can only speak my individual opinion; but I agree with the noble Duke in thinking it would be a very difficult matter to carry out the suggestion of branding dairy cows. Of course, it will be my duty to bring these matters before the President of the Board of Agriculture. With regard to the question of dividing the compensation, I can, perhaps, take upon myself to answer that in this way. People are, no doubt, generally willing to receive more than they are promised, but would strongly resent a proposal to give them less. Therefore, I do not think that the Board of Agriculture would in any way countenance the division of compensation. With respect to the matter which Lord Wenlock mentioned, I would point out that if you divide the powers of carrying out this measure between two bodies there must be some delay in communication, and possibly some friction, and, while that is going on, the opportunity of effecting the object for which the intervention is required is lost. But, my Lords, there is one thing of which I am quite sure, and that is that the Minister of Agriculture will be thankful for the Debate which has taken place in this House, and for the outspoken manner in which so many noble Lords have expressed their desire of seeing this measure carried out in an efficient manner. I can only say that I think the present Minister of Agriculture is the right man to act energetically if you give him the power. My Lords, I propose to refer the Bill to Committee of the whole House on Monday week. It is a matter of such general interest that I think your Lordships will agree it should be dealt with in Committee of the whole House.

A noble LORD: My Lords, I would venture to suggest to my noble Friend that Monday week would hardly be a good day to fix for going into Committee on this Bill. I do not suppose there are likely to be many Amendments proposed; but I would point out that Monday week will be the commencement of the Agricultural Show at Plymouth, and I think, therefore, that possibly many of your Lordships may be absent.

LORD DENMAN: My Lords, having had much experience on the question of compensation for the slaughter of animals affected with pleuro-pneumonia, I desire to make a few observations on the subject. On one occasion, in 1850, I had nine animals in Ireland which had come from the centre of England, I think Market Harborough, so deeply affected with pleuro-pneumonia that they had to be destroyed. Frequently it was found that no other animals were injured, but we now hear from a noble Lord that in a single instance 83 animals have been killed. I can only say that a tenant of mine, who lost several cattle by pleuro-pneumonia, was very much reduced in circumstances in consequence of the small allowance that was made to him. My Lords, I believe that a Minister of Agriculture should have the power to apportion the funds applicable, so as to make some regular allowance to those who lose their cattle, for I believe that as far as the Local Authorities are concerned, they may differ in every district throughout the country. In regard to moving cattle there has been great difficulty everywhere, in consequence of the difference in regulations and the want of unanimity between the various Local Authorities. You must establish some principle of action, and then do all you can to carry it out for the purpose of eradicating the disease. Skilled inspectors are necessary. It was my misfortune once to have to kill an injured animal on my own authority, and because the veterinary surgeon whom I called in happened not to be an Inspector, I was obliged to pay £10. If the proper veterinary surgeon had been called in, and had certified the disease as rinderpest, I should have escaped payment. No body or authority, save the right hon. the Minister of Agriculture, should have the power to discriminate and say whether it is possible to save the lives of animals. I am afraid there has been a great conflict of authorities in this matter, and that such conflict will arise has always been my great fear in the establishment of local bodies.

On Question, agreed to.

Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

EDUCATION OF BLIND AND DEAF-MUTE CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL.

(NO. 101.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

*THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (The Marquess of LOTHIAN): My Lords, I regret very much that I have not been able to bring this Bill under the consideration of your Lordships' House at an earlier period of the evening, because it is one which I trust will appeal to your Lordships' sympathy and assent. The House has been during a considerable portion of the evening considering the manner in which youthful offenders should be dealt with—that is to say, devoting its attention to the welfare of children of criminal, or, to say the least, not of the best character. But the Bill which I present this evening is for the benefit of another class altogether, namely, children suffering under natural affliction, in that they have been born blind or deaf and dumb. Your Lordships will recollect that in 1885 a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the whole question of the condition of blind and deaf-mute children in the United Kingdom. Of that Commission my noble Friend Lord Egerton of Tatton was Chairman, and I regret to say that a telegram has been just received from the noble Lord stating his inability to be present this evening, because his countenance and knowledge would have been of the greatest possible value in any discussion which may arise on this measure. Now, my Lords, the Bill of which I now move the Second Reading is founded mainly upon the Report of that Commission. That Report deals not only with the question of the education of blind and deaf-mute children, but also with the treatment of adults, and the different systems which are now in use with regard to the care of such afflicted persons in after life not only in Great Britain but on the Continent. The Bill to which I ask your Lordships' assent this evening refers only to the educational portion of that Report. In the main, the Report made three recommendations in reference to the education of blind and deaf-mute children. One of those recommendations was that the compulsory clauses of the Education Act should be extended to these children; the second recommendation was that the school authority should have power to defray the expenses of the education of such children at the different institutions in the country, of their boarding out, and of their journeys to and from such institutions if they happen to be at a distance, away from their own parishes, and the third recommendation was that in the case of these children there should be an increase in the education grants. With regard to the first of those recommendations, namely, that the compulsory clauses of the Education Act should be extended to these children, I should not like to say that even under the present Act those compulsory clauses do not extend to this class of children. My impression is that under the existing compulsory clauses the School Board Authorities might be bound to find means for the education of these afflicted children, and that when those means of education have been found and provided, that the compulsory clauses should be put into effect as regards them. But, on the other hand, I believe there may be some doubt whether under the interpretation of these clauses those provisions can be carried so far. I am inclined to think, too, that further doubt may be cast upon their possible interpretation in that way by the 69th clause of the Education (Scotland) Act of 1872. There is a provision there that fees may be paid for the education of the blind; but there is no such provision with regard to deaf mutes. That would, I think, go far to show that a special provision is required. But, whether there is any doubt on the question or not, I think that it is quite obvious that even if these compulsory clauses were intended to be put into effect, it would not be found possible to do so. It has, in fact, been found impossible to give effect to them, because, scattered throughout Scotland there may be very few of these children in certain districts, and in order to provide for them it might be necessary to send them to some central point where means could be provided for their education. Even if it were possible for the School Boards to deal with them under the clauses I have mentioned it would not be desirable, because I think the whole tone and tendency of the Report of the Royal Commission goes to show that, especially as regards the deaf mutes, they would be better educated and cared for in scattered institutions than they could be directly under the School Boards. One of the objects of this Bill is to remove any doubt with regard to the compulsory powers being intended to apply to the education of these children, but, coupled with that compulsion, it is absolutely necessary to give to School Boards powers, which they do not now possess, of providing funds for sending these children to such institutions, and for boarding them out and defraying the expenses of their journeys. I am quite willing to admit that these powers are somewhat novel, and that, under certain circumstances, some slight cost might be incurred. The powers are novel in two respects. First, there is the power enabling School Boards to contribute to schools already established. The second power, which is new, is that which enables an Educational Authority to pay for board and lodging. If there is any risk in establishing a new principle by this it ought, I think, still to be done; but I do not think there is any such risk, because these powers are so strictly limited to cases of blind and deaf mute children that they cannot possibly be extended under this measure to any other class of the community. I think your Lordships will agree that after so much consideration has been given to the subject by the Royal Commission, and it having been found absolutely impossible to carry out their recommendations in any other way, it is necessary to approve of these proposals. The third recommendation of the Commission was that additional grants should be given in the case of these children. On this point I have to say that it has not been thought necessary to make such a provision in the Bill; but should it appear necessary that such additional grants should be given, the Department is perfectly willing to give power with consent of Parliament, and under proper precautions, for grants to be given in each necessary case. Those propositions constitute the object of the Bill, namely, that the School Boards should be allowed to provide the education specially required for these afflicted children in the way which may be found most suitable to their needs, and that the compulsory powers of the Education Act should be exercised in regard to these children. The other provisions of the Bill I need not enter into; they are simply for the purpose of carrying out its object. I would, however, refer to Clause 5, which provides that in case of the non-attendance of a child at school it shall be admitted as a sufficient excuse that the child is a deaf mute under seven years of age. The compulsory school age in Scotland is five, but the Commissioners recommend that in the case of deaf mute children the compulsory clauses should not be applied under the age of seven. Then, by Clause 3, reference is made to children up to 16 years of age, but it is not proposed that the compulsory powers should be put in force over the age of 14. The clause only gives powers to School Boards to make contributions up to the age of 16. Another clause has regard to the religious opinions of parents, and it is provided that a child shall not be sent to an institution without the consent of its parents, and there is general power given to the Educational Department of seeing that these provisions are not carried out in a vexatious manner. With regard to the powers of charging the rates with boarding-out expenses, I think they will not be very far-reaching or involve great cost. Under the possible supposition that the School Boards are bound to provide for the education of these children, under the existing Acts that could not be done without incurring the great expense which must ultimately fall on the rates. The expense will not be very large, I think, if this Bill passes. As far as I know the number of blind children of school age in Scotland is 240, and of deaf mute children 781. But a large number of those children are at present at schools to which they have been sent by charitable persons, or in other ways provided for, and it may, on the whole, be said that only about half remain to be educated, and, therefore, about 500 children would come under the provisions of this Act. Of those 500 some are probably not fit subjects for education at all, either mentally or physically. Therefore, my Lords, even supposing these charges were considerable, for so small a number of children, no great addition could fall upon the rates. I do not think, therefore, in that respect I need expect any opposition from your Lordships' House. My Lords, I venture to think that although, as I stated before, the Bill is not a very large one, affecting, perhaps, not more than 500 persons in the whole, it is a measure which appeals specially to your Lordships' consideration. By the Royal Commission the condition of both blind and deaf-and-dumb children was inquired into. But those classes of children are essentially different from each other in the nature of their afflictions, and your Lordships will at once recognise that blind children are not cut off in the same way from outside influences and surroundings in the same way or to the same extent as deaf mutes, and, as a rule, their deprivation from loss of sight is often made up for by greater intelligence and greater quickness of perception in their other senses. In the Middle Ages your Lordships will remember that deaf mutes were generally treated as imbeciles. The first effort which was made to treat them as intelligent human beings was in Spain in 1570, when a charitable monk took four deaf-mute children under his care, and made an attempt to give them an education. In this country a similar attempt was made a hundred years afterwards at Oxford with more or less satisfactory results. Since that time charitable institutions for dealing with these children have been established in all the countries of Europe, and different methods have been tried of treating them. But, my Lords, this is the very first attempt which has been made in the United Kingdom to provide by enactment that education shall be secured to these afflicted children. For that reason I am glad to have had the opportunity of bringing in this Bill as regards Scotland. If it should pass through Parliament this Session some legislative recognition will have been made of the fact that children, however afflicted, must be given an education which will enable their faculties to be more developed, and thus, so far, alleviate the unhappy condition under which, through no fault of their own, they are compelled to pass their lives. I beg to move that the Bill be read a second time.

On Question, agreed to.

Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

DURATION OF SPEECHES IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS BILL.—(No. 4.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

LORD DENMAN: My Lords, this subject has been introduced now for several years. I happen to know that a Member of the other House is extremely anxious to introduce there a Bill of this description. It is, I know, your Lordships' habit in this House to cultivate brevity of speech, and only last Thursday a noble Lord who is connected with the Haddington County Council proposed that no speaker should exceed 10 minutes in that assembly. Long speeches lead to no good results. In many congresses and conferences members are not permitted to speak for more than 10, 15, or 20 minutes. The High Commissioners of the Established Church in Scotland have proposed that the duration of speeches should be limited to 15 minutes. Of course, in Committee, or anything of that kind, that would be unnecessary. My Lords, I have only further to point out that the sounding of a bell is not so very offensive, and even then if no other speaker rises the speaker addressing the House might continue his remarks. I really think there is not one of your Lordships who would wish to have the privilege of speaking for two or three hours, and it is not the characteristic of speeches in your Lordships' House, that they should be expanded to any great length. I believe, my Lords, that this Bill would do a great deal of good. We know that an undue extension of speeches may do the greatest possible harm.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Denman.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, I am sorry to say that I am under the painful necessity of moving your Lordships that this Bill should be read a second time this day six months. I do not think the noble Lord has done justice to himself or to the House, because he has not given any description of the provisions of the measure. I do not know whether your Lordships have read the Bill, but it proposes a kind of procedure which certainly would not add to the dignity of this House, or stimulate the despatch of business. The examples which the noble Lord has cited in the Preamble of his Bill are the Social Science Congress in Edinburgh and the diocesan conferences at Lichfield, Nottingham, and Derby. I am quite unable to follow what is to happen if such a Bill as this were to pass, because I see it is proposed that the clerk should sound a bell, as is done at those conferences. Then, I observe that it is intended to allow a Privy Councillor to speak for half an hour (and under certain circumstances an hour), while other noble Lords would only be allowed half that time. I think that an invidious distinction. I do not think the noble Lord can really desire that such a Bill should pass into law; and I feel it my duty to move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months. When the Question comes to be put, I hope the noble Lord will challenge my opinion audibly, so that I may know whether the noble Lord desires to divide.

LORD DENMAN: It is proposed in the House of Commons to give Privy Councillors an unlimited time and other Members much less. This day six months will be a very inconvenient postponement, and I hope your Lordships will not agree to it.

Amendment moved to leave out ("now") and add at the end of the Motion ("this day six months.")—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On question that ("now") stand part of the Motion, resolved in the negative; and Bill to be read 2ª on this day six months.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (BOROUGH OF BELFAST) BILL.—(No. 91.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

*THE EARL OF ERNE: My Lords, the Bill I am asking your Lordships to read a second time is very simple and is designed to regulate the registration of voters in the borough of Belfast, and deals with other matters connected with that borough. By the Redistribution of Seats Act, 1885, the boundaries of the borough of Belfast were extended so as to include seven townlands in the County of Antrim and 14 in the County Down; and the electors in those places have thereby become electors for the Borough of Belfast. By an arrangement existing before that Act came into operation the expenses of the Clerk of the Peace were paid by the Grand Jury of Antrim, but when the borough was extended by including townlands in the County Down, the County Antrim objected to pay the expenses of registering voters living in those townlands. There was no power to compel them to do so, and, as a matter of fact, I believe the Clerk of the Peace has been out of pocket for that reason since 1887. That is obviously unjust, and the Bill is intended to remedy it. The Bill provides that the accounts of expenses shall be laid before the Recorder of Belfast, who shall certify the sums to be paid. The amounts to be contributed by the two counties are to be calculated according to the proportions which the voters in the town lands bear to the total number of voters in Belfast. The accounts, certified by the Recorder, are to be laid before the Grand Juries of Down and Antrim and Town Council of Belfast, and those bodies are to present for such sums as are due to the Clerk of the Peace and Town Clerk respectively. There is another provision, giving authority for the use of the Antrim Court House. The Sheriff has to be asked for permission every time it is used: that has been done by mutual arrangement, and in future it will be dispensed with. I have only to add that this Bill has passed the House of Commons without opposition, and the Lord Privy Seal has authorised me to state that there is no objection to it on the part of Her Majesty's Government. I trust it will receive your Lordships' assent, and I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

On Question, agreed to.

Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

HERRING FISHERY (SCOTLAND) ACT (1889) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 75.)

Read 3^a (according to order) with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.

Report from, That the Committee have added the Lord Clifford of Chudleigh and the Lord Morris to the Standing Committee for General Bills for the consideration of the Custody of Children Bill and the Protection of Children Bill; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

THE NEW BARRACKS.

QUESTION—OBSERVATIONS.

*EARL **BEAUCHAMP**, in rising to ask Her Majesty's Government whether, in the new barracks about to be erected, care will be taken to provide proper accommodation for baths for the soldiers, said: My Lords, if I had any reason to suppose that Her Majesty's Government were likely to give a negative reply to the Question I am about to put, I might perhaps detain your Lordships at some little length in pointing out how necessary it is that proper accommodation should be given as regards baths for maintaining Her Majesty's Forces in health. As I have reason to believe that the answer which will be given on behalf of the Government will be thoroughly satisfactory, I see no reason for detaining your Lordships on the subject, except to observe that when the somewhat large outlay for providing accommodation for Her Majesty's Forces which has been too long delayed is carried out, we have reason to hope that every precaution will be taken for their construction, according to the best scientific rules which have been laid down. I beg leave to ask the noble Earl the question which stands in my name.

*THE EARL OF **POWIS**: Before my noble Friend the Under Secretary for War gives an answer, I should like to call attention to two paragraphs in the Report to the War Office of the architects who were employed to report upon these new barracks. The architects say that provision should be made for ventilation and for small larders with air openings attached to the living rooms in each of the quarters. I think none of your Lordships, in building a new cottage, would think of building a pantry without ventilation to the open air, where the residents might keep their meat, milk, and butter. Architects are very often, I am afraid, apt to think more of the appearance of rooms in the way of decoration than of the substantial advantages derived from sanitary arrangements, and I think, my Lords, it would be a very good thing if provisions of this kind were made. We are building these barracks and providing rooms for the accommodation of sergeants and corporals, respectable men on whom the maintenance of discipline in the Army mainly depends. Those who understand the difficulty of recruiting and keeping men in the Army in these times know that it is not easy to keep soldiers with the colours as long as we could wish for the advantage of the Service. I hope, therefore, the Secretary for War will not think it is an extravagant matter to provide a small larder for each quarter. There is another paragraph in which I do not concur in which they say there is no occasion for providing a separate scullery for each quarter. I think that to give to two families only one scullery is a very good receipt for breeding quarrels between neighbours. To have two families washing their crockery and clothes in one scullery at the same time, must, I think, lead to considerable confusion and conflict, and I think that with two families of children running about the same scullery, the destruction of each other's crockery would be very considerable. Therefore, I hope that the allowance of accommodation in that respect will not be curtailed. There is another question which the noble Earl has put, with regard to baths. In all large towns baths and washhouses are comprised in the same establishment; and in the large camps, such as Shorncliffe, Aldershot, or Colchester, and in those large sets of barracks which it is in contemplation to put up under this Act for one or two regiments, I think it would be a matter worth the consideration of the Secretary of State for War whether it might not be advantageous and economical to build public wash-houses for the soldiers. In London the poorer people find that it is more economical to pay 1d. an hour, or whatever the charge is, for the use of the wash-houses than to consume their own fuel and have the inconvenience of the heat and steam from the hot water in their own apartments; and I think it would prove to be the same thing in these barracks where there are enough soldiers collected together to make full use of a common wash-house. I think, also, it would be found that a small payment, which would go towards providing the coals, would be a very great comfort and convenience. I do not ask that this should be done without consideration, but I merely suggest that it might be worth the attention of the Secretary of State for War and that the matter might be gone into and considered.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Earl BROWNLOW): My Lords, in reply to the question of the noble Earl, I can assure the House that the War Department are fully alive to the advantages of giving every facility for ablution to the soldiers, and it is proposed to provide baths in the new barracks. The baths will be made of slate, that having been found to be the best material for the purpose, as it is clean, durable, and cheap. It is intended that these baths should be each in a separate room; and, further, where there are opportunities for it, it is proposed to give every facility for open-air bathing during the summer months. It is now under consideration whether it would be practicable or desirable in the new barracks to introduce steam for heating purposes. I cannot say at this moment whether that can be carried out. The question of expense may raise a difficulty in the way of its introduction. But if it can be done, the steam raised will be made available for purposes of heating water for washing. With regard to the points raised by Lord Powis, if I had known that the noble Earl intended to raise them, I should have been very glad to have inquired into the matter, so that I might have been able to go into the question with him. But they are rather questions of small detail in a large matter; that is to say, the provision of married soldiers' quarters. The difficulty with those quarters is that some men have large families and some have small ones, and it is very difficult to construct quarters that are suitable for families of all sizes. I can, however, assure the noble Earl that I shall be very glad to go carefully into the points which he has spoken of this evening with the view to making the soldiers and their wives as comfortable as possible in their new married quarters.

House adjourned at Twenty minutes past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 12th June, 1890.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4) BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*(3.5.) MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time on this day six months. It is a Bill which relates to questions of an exceptional character, and ought to be dealt with by a Select Committee instead of being a matter of arrangement between the proprietor and present tenant of the Scilly Islands and the President of the Board of Trade. It appears to me that this Pier and Harbour Provisional Order Bill has grown out of the situation which has been created in the Scilly Islands in reference to Local Government. If I am not mistaken, provision was made by an agreement between Mr. Dorrien Smith and the inhabitants of the islands for the maintenance of a pier at St. Mary's, by which it was provided that certain dues should be levied upon the export of flowers, lobsters, cray fish, and other articles. If that is correct, I think some explanation is required of the present proposal taken in connection with that agreement. I have every wish to speak with great respect for the reputation of Mr. Dorrien Smith. He has, I believe, always taken an enlightened interest in the development of the islands and the wellbeing of the inhabitants. But this Bill gives an exceptional treatment to Mr. Dorrien Smith, who occupies the position of leaseholder under the Duchy of Cornwall. The Provisional Order proposes to confer upon him much greater privileges than have been given to other landlords under similar circumstances, and I desire to know whether the Board of Trade is absolutely within its rights in making the Bill retrospective. It covers the existing works in connection with the present St. Mary's, which were executed under a *quasi*-agreement between Mr. Dorrien Smith and the inhabitants, and which ought to be provided for in accordance with that agreement. With regard to the schedule attached to the Bill, I wish to call attention to the fact that it undoubtedly places the inhabitants of the Scilly Islands at a disadvantage. Almost the whole of the necessaries of life have to be conveyed from the mainland, the Great Western Railway Company have the monopoly of carrying them, and if I am rightly informed, their charges are exceedingly high. That being so, I wish to draw the attention of the House to the fact that the dues proposed to be sanctioned in this Bill for shipping and unshipping at St. Mary's Pier are considerably higher than elsewhere. This proposal was coupled, in the first instance, with another harbour scheme for Criccieth in Wales. There may be circumstances which justify a difference between one place and the other, but, having already to pay heavy charges upon articles of prime necessity, brought over by the steamers of the Great Western Company, it is now proposed that when such articles are landed in the Scilly Islands, the inhabitants shall pay from 50 to 100 per cent. higher than the inhabitants of Criccieth. For instance, fruit, apples, and pears, which are to pay 3d. for 2 cwt. at Criccieth, are to pay 3d. for 1 cwt. at St. Mary's; bacon and pork, which are to pay 3d. for 2½ cwt. at Criccieth, will have to pay 2d. for 1 cwt. in the Scilly Islands; beef, which is to pay 3d. for 2½ cwt. at Criccieth, will pay 2d. per cwt. at St. Mary's, and in the same way the charges for butter, candles, haberdashery, hosiery, and groceries are all much higher. Then, again, so far as I can ascertain from this schedule, the dues upon the export of flowers and shell fish are left as addi-

tional dues to be levied by Mr. Dorrien Smith, independently of the schedule, upon imports under the Provisional Order Bill. These are points upon which I think the House is entitled to have information from the President of the Board of Trade. Then, again, Mr. Dorrien Smith and his representatives, the "undertakers" as they are called in the Bill, are empowered to charge, under the 10th section of the Bill, for the use of warehouses, offices, and sheds, and have privileges and advantages which are not usually given in similar measures. I understand that in the Scilly Islands from time immemorial there has been a claim on the part of the tenant to charge dues on vessels at a distance from the pier, which derive no benefit from the pier, but are anchored outside the pier and breakwater. I understand that the right to levy these dues has been challenged in the past by various shipowners, and successfully challenged; and I should like to know whether the Bill will authorise, in any sense, these charges for anchorage? These are the various points upon which I ask for information, and, although I move formally the Motion which stands in my name, I shall be guided in the course I take by the reply I receive from the President of the Board of Trade.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day three months."—(*Mr. Channing.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*(3.22.) THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): If there was any desire on the part of anyone in the Scilly Islands that the Bill should be considered by a Select Committee, or if any objection was entertained to any part of the Bill, all that was necessary was to present a Petition against it, and the Bill would have been sent to a Select Committee as the hon. Member desires, and I venture to say that it would have been much more satisfactorily dealt with there than it can be in this House. But no such Petition was presented. On the contrary, the only Petition was one from St. Mary's, strongly in favour of the Bill. Therefore, I infer that the hon. Member does not represent objections which come from the inhabitants of the Scilly Islands.

*MR. CHANNING: The statements which I have made are made on the authority of a gentleman who resides on the mainland, and who is intimately acquainted with the wants of the inhabitants. He informs me that there was great reluctance on the part of the inhabitants to come forward in the matter owing to certain circumstances to which I do not wish to refer. [*Cries of* "Name."] I do not think that I am called upon to give the name of my correspondent. All I can say is, that my correspondent is vouched for by another hon. Member as a person of authority and integrity.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Then the objector to the Bill is an anonymous individual, who is not authorised to act for the inhabitants. Under those circumstances, I do not think I need waste much of the time of the House in discussing the matter. All I will say is, that the proprietor or leaseholder of the Scilly Islands, Mr. Dorrien Smith, in whose favour I was glad to hear the hon. Member say so much, has recently addressed a letter to the Press explaining the origin of this measure. He says that he was asked last year, by a public meeting of the inhabitants held at St. Mary's, to extend the pier, and he told them he was willing to do so if they would pay increased tolls. The inhabitants gladly accepted his proposal, and they have had ample time to re-consider the matter if they desired. No objection has been raised, but, on the contrary, all have spoken enthusiastically in favour of the Bill. The Bill has absolutely nothing to do with local government in the Scilly Islands. It is not an exceptional measure; but it is an ordinary Bill by which, in return for the facilities given to the traders in Scilly by the extension of the pier, the person who carries out the extension is entitled to charge dues for the use of the pier. If the Bill does not pass, the result will be that Mr. Dorrien Smith will be able to charge anything for the use of the pier that he pleases; and, so far as the tariff of charges is concerned, it is the same as that which was adopted by the fishermen themselves for a similar work at Newlyn on the mainland. The power to levy dues is restricted to certain narrow limits, and there are 100 miles of coast outside the pier in respect of which no dues will be levied. I do not think it is necessary to trouble the House with any further explanation of the provisions of the Bill, and I trust that the proposal of the hon. Member will be decisively rejected.

(3.30.) Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): The right hon. Gentleman has based his reply to my hon. Friend who moved the rejection of the Bill mainly upon the ground that no desire has been expressed by the inhabitants of the Scilly Islands to oppose the measure. The right hon. Gentleman says that no opposition has been raised to the Bill in a Parliamentary sense, but that, on the contrary, there has been a Petition presented in its favour from a public meeting, held at St. Mary's, which Petition went before the Examiners of Private Bills. From these facts the right hon. Gentleman, in reply to my hon. Friend, infers—I do not say unfairly—that the only authority we have in this House for opposing the Second Reading emanates from persons not connected with the Island, who live on the mainland, and are not the legitimate or authorised spokesmen of the islanders. I think I shall be able, before I conclude, to bring forward some evidence to show that our opposition is based upon the complaints of the islanders themselves. I undertake to show why no opposition has been raised in the Islands, and I propose, further, to bring forward a fact which I challenge the right hon. Gentleman to controvert, which ought absolutely and irrevocably to put an end to the Bill. The first I heard of this Bill was after my return from the East, and, as I had had reason on a former occasion to view with grave suspicion this kind of legislation, I took the trouble to look into the Bill in order to see what its provisions were. I found that my hon. Friend had been in communication with certain gentlemen in Cornwall in regard to the measure, and he consulted me as to what ought to be done. At that time I had had no communication with any one in the West, but when I saw what the character of the Bill was, I wrote a letter to the *Western Daily Mercury* at Plymouth which was subsequently circulated in the Island. In consequence, I received numerous letters, one or two of which I ask the House to allow me to read. The first is from the Rev. Arthur E. Barran, the priest in charge at St. Martin's, who writes as follows:—

> "May I ask for a copy of the Bill referring to the harbour dues of Scilly? I have hitherto been a staunch supporter of Mr. Dorrien Smith; but if things are as stated in your letter to the *Western Daily Mercury*, I shall feel it my duty to assist in opposing such a measure. The proposed dues have astonished me. I was, of course, aware of the duty on exported flowers, and with this I could find no fault, as the inhabitants were called together by Mr. Dorrien Smith, and agreed to pay this extra due if he would lengthen the St. Mary's Pier."

In reference to the facts mentioned in this letter, I wish to say that I am speaking without the slightest feeling against Mr. Dorrien Smith. Since my connection with the county, I have always heard the name of Dr. Augustus Smith, the predecessor of Mr. Dorrien Smith, spoken of with reverence and respect; and I have no reason to believe that Mr. Dorrien Smith, the present lessee, has done anything to disentitle him to the same regard. I do not propose to give all the names of my correspondents, although I am ready to show them to the President of the Board of Trade to prove that the letters are not *bogus* letters. The writer of one of them says—

> "I am thankful to you for the very great kindness you have manifested towards us as a people—inhabitants of the Scilly Islands—in sending to us circulars which give us information as to what is onward in Parliament, that will much affect our interest here, on the Islands of Scilly. Had it not been for you I question whether very few would have known anything in regard to the Scilly Pier and Harbour Bill. We were very astonished to find such a measure before a Parliament of British Representatives in a free country and under the reign of Free Trade. I have read, thought, and conversed with many of our friends in regard to the matter. I had thought of calling a meeting at St. Mary's, and moving a resolution stating objections to the Bill in its present form; but I find, among persons whom I have conversed with, that fear keeps them back. They have stated to me if they meet and oppose the Bill they will be marked men and risk all their interest here, on the Island of Scilly, and be the subjects of notice to quit, and that means to leave the Islands. So they have suggested to me to write you, and ask you to be kind and send me a copy of the Bill by return if possible. Mr. Smith is very much excited over the appearance of your circular, and he has stated that the report is false. I have just seen one of Mr. Smith's notices, which I have copied every word for your information, as follows:—'Notice. A Pamphlet having been circulated on the Islands conveying a false impression as to the Pier Bill and

> Harbour for the Scilly Islands now before the House of Commons, Mr. Dorrien Smith will be happy to see any of his tenantry at the Public Buildings who are desirous of meeting him, on Saturday next, May 24th, at 3.30 p.m., and will give any explanation needed.' "

As this letter introduces the question of fear on the part of the inhabitants, let me explain that this fear probably arises from the fact that, with all his philanthrophy, the late Dr. Augustus Smith was exceedingly autocratic, and did not hesitate to have persons who were obnoxious to him removed from the Islands. Another letter I have is from a gentleman who had been spending some days on the Island—Mr. S. Lear Head—who writes from Ivybridge South Devon. He says—

> "I have just returned from the Scilly Island, and during my stay I have come into contact with many of the islanders. I find the all-absorbing topic to be this Pier and Harbour Bill and your action thereon. Last week, after your extracts from the *Western Daily Mercury* had been circulated, Mr. Smith issued a notice somewhat to this effect—'Erroneous impression having gone abroad owing to the circulation of some extracts, &c., from the *Western Daily Mercury*, Mr. Smith will be happy to meet his tenantry on Saturday next, at 3 p.m., and explain the provisions of the new Bill.' This meeting was duly held, and about 30 of the tenants were present, with Mr. Smith in the chair; and as you will have seen, a vote of confidence in Mr. Smith was passed, and for why? because not one dared speak a word against their lord proprietor. From what I can gather nearly all the tenants hold their property on a yearly tenancy, and if anyone raised a dissentient voice the probability is that he would get notice to quit forthwith. And even if he did not, it would cause such a state of friction as would be simply intolerable and unbearable. On Tuesday last a further meeting was held, and, although Mr. Smith was not present, the clergyman was. There was a considerable attendance, and it was ultimately decided to send a Petition to Mr. Bolitho urging him to use his best endeavours to get the Bill passed. This Petition was there and then framed and signed by many of those present; but those who did not now hear that it is to be carried around from house to house. This is simply monstrous: everyone will feel bound to sign rather than offend Mr. Smith. As far as I can gather, in a casual way, the late proprietor, Mr. Augustus Smith, spent £10,000 on the pier in accordance with the terms of his original lease from the duchy. The present Mr. Dorrien Smith has now spent a further £4,000, and the islanders have agreed to compensate him by an additional tax on all their flowers and vegetables exported. They have not at all agreed to pay on their imports, and were not aware that any such tariff was to be imposed. And they decidedly object to having to pay on the articles named in your paper, including, amongst others, the necessaries of life. Without passing any approval or an opinion, I, as an independent person, cannot fail to see that there is a great deal of dissatisfaction among the islanders generally. The whole gist of their complaint is not so much against Mr. Smith personally, but against his being saddled with additional authority which is already practically absolute, and therefore very burdensome at any time. Such authority ought not to be in the hands of any one man. I may say that I am not at all personally interested in this matter, but as a passing visitor. I have never been there before, but I thought you ought to know how affairs stood. I am writing Mr. Bolitho much to this same effect, and if I can be of any further use, kindly communicate with me."

This is from a second independent witness. A third letter comes from a gentleman in Penzance—Mr. Clement Chudleigh—who writes as follows on the 31st of May:—

> "I have been prosecuting inquiries, hence the delay in replying to your favour of the 26th inst. You will doubtless have seen a report in the *Western Morning News* of a meeting held by Mr. Smith last Saturday—I send you a copy for perusal in case you did not see it. I have had a conversation with one who was present, and he tells me the tenantry cannot oppose Mr. Smith, as they are completely in his hands, and to go in opposition to him would mean his retaliating to the ruination of them by non-renewal of leases and otherwise; in other words, they have to do as he wishes if they want to live at all. Nevertheless, he says the meeting, at which there was not more than 30 present, and those by the special request of Mr. Smith's agent, was not unanimous, although the opposition had to stifle itself. The next dodge was for the Magistrates to organise a meeting in Mr. Smith's absence. At this the opposition was more pronounced. About 50 attended, and eventually, after trying several resolutions, and failing to carry them, or rather withdrawing them on account of the opposition, either 17 or 18 held up their hands in favour of signing some kind of a Petition to Mr. Bolitho, M.P., in favour of the Bill, and subsequently canvassed for signatures. My informant, although utterly opposed to the Bill, signed this Petition, being, he assured me, afraid to refrain from doing so, for, as he said, Mr. Smith will see the list of signatures, and will know who did and who did not sign it."

I have other letters, in addition to those I have read, which state distinctly that although the islanders agreed to pay increased dues upon the export of flowers and potatoes, they had not the remotest idea that they would be called upon to pay dues upon the importation of the necessaries of life. What these increased dues are the hon. Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Channing) has already stated, but the islanders contemplated nothing of the kind, and cannot be said to have had due notice. The right hon. Gentleman has referred to the Newlyn tariff, but that tariff merely affects fish, and does not apply to 200 and odd articles which form the necessaries of life. The right hon. Gentleman asks what harm the tariff will do, and says that it is only to apply to half a mile of the coast, leaving 100 miles untouched. But the right hon. Gentleman must be aware that the harbour of St. Mary's is the harbour of the Scilly Islands; it is the only place of trading, and from that harbour all the articles introduced are transhipped and forwarded to the other Islands. I, therefore, hope the right hon. Gentleman will not insist upon that argument. He has said nothing about the retrospective character of the Bill, but, as far as I understand it, it is clearly retrospective. I come now to another point. The 14th clause of the Bill says—

> "If at any time and from time to time the clear annual income derived from the pier and works authorised by this Order in the average of the then three last preceding years, after payment of all expenses and outgoings, shall exceed interest at the rate of 10 per centum per annum on the entire sum from time to time appearing to the Board of Trade to have been expended in executing the pier and the works authorised by this Order, including in such expenditure the sum of £10,000 already expended on the existing pier and works, the Board of Trade may, if in their discretion they think fit, on application in writing from six or more of the owners of vessels or boats using the pier, and after hearing the undertakers reduce the rates leviable under this Order to such amounts as will be sufficient to provide the aforesaid interest at the rate of 10 per centum per annum."

Now, I would ask any hon. Member if he can point to any single instance in the legislation of this country in which Parliament has guaranteed to any landowner 10 per cent. for his money?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It is the regular course.

MR. CONYBEARE: If that is so, all I can say is that the sooner it becomes an irregular course the better. In many instances capitalists have to be content with an interest of 2¾ per cent. It is all very well to say that Mr. Smith is not likely to get 10 per cent.; but, if so, why not cut out the 10 per cent? Why insert a clause which will preclude any reduction of rates until Mr. Smith has been paid 10 per cent.; I hope that the House will reject, at any rate, that portion of the scheme. And now I come to the last point. If the right hon. Gentleman will look at the General Piers and Harbours Act of 1861 he will find that Sub-section 1 of Clause 9 provides that a schedule of the rates to be charged shall be published once at least in each of two consecutive weeks—in the months of October and November—in some newspaper circulated in the district in which the works are proposed to be constructed. I wish to know from the right hon. Gentleman whether this has been done? I hold in my hand a copy of the *Cornish Telegraph* of November last; but it only gives an analysis of the Provisional Order in a condensed form, and contains no schedule at all. I have caused inquiries to be made upon this important point, and I have received two telegrams, which I will read to the House. The first says—

> "The local papers—*Cornish Telegraph* and *Cornishman*—the only ones circulated to any extent at Scilly—say the draft order, as in *Telegraph* sent you, is the only advertisement they have had. I have not seen the schedule of rates in any other paper. There can be no doubt of its not being advertised."

That telegram reached me this morning from Penzance, where both of these newspapers are published. The second telegram comes from the Islands of Scilly, and I received it last night. It says, "Rates not published in local papers that we know." Unless the right hon. Gentleman is in the possession of evidence to show that the Schedule of Rates was published, I maintain that the provisions of the general Act have not been complied with.

*(3.55.) MR. BOLITHO (Cornwall, St. Ives): I fail to see that any valid reason has been adduced why the House should refuse to read this Bill a second time. When the scheme was first conceived, a considerable amount of pressure had to be put upon the lessee to induce him to undertake the responsibility of introducing the Bill, and from that time until the measure came before the House not a word of objection was urged against it. What fell from the hon. Member who moved the rejection of the Bill satisfies me that the objections now urged are of a very trivial nature. The House will, I think, admit that any private individual who takes upon himself a responsibility of this

kind for the benefit of the public is fairly entitled to be recouped the amount of his expenditure with interest. The tenancy of Mr. Dorrien Smith's lease is only short, and, at the expiration of the lease, he has no assurance that a renewal will be granted. The Petition in favour of the Bill was signed by all the most responsible persons in the Islands, and I do not believe that any objections were concealed, because the individuals holding them were afraid to express their opinions.

*(3.58.) SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I have no right to address the House again, but I wish to say that I have no doubt all the requirements of the law were complied with. In proof of that I need only say that it is the duty of the Examiners of Private Bills to see that the Standing Orders had been complied with.

(3.59.) MR. CONYBEARE: I have caused the Papers to be searched, and cannot find that the schedule was published. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in the face of that evidence, a mere assurance that he has no reason to believe that all the formalities have not been gone through is quite sufficient. Will he not, at any rate, consent to the postponement of the Second Reading until further inquiry can be made?

(4.0.) MR. DILLWYN (Swansea Town): I shall certainly support the Second Reading of the Bill. I am not myself an inhabitant of that part of the world, but I have visited the Scilly Islands, and can bear testimony to the great benefits which have been conferred upon the Islands by the present proprietor and his predecessors.

*(4.2.) MR. CHANNING: In asking leave to withdraw the Amendment, I do so not because I am satisfied by the reply of the President of the Board of Trade, but because I propose to move to refer the Bill to a Select Committee.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid.): I hope the hon. Member will not withdraw the Amendment. I maintain that this House does not sit here for the simple purpose of conferring gifts upon landlords, no matter what part of the world they may live in. I sincerely hope that the hon. Member will go to a Division.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

REVISING BARRISTERS (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Address for—

"Return showing the Circuits within which the several Revising Barristers were appointed in England and Wales in the year 1889; the names of the Barristers appointed; the places where each Barrister sat; the electoral areas included in each Circuit; the total number of voters in each group of areas included in a Circuit; the number of days actually occupied by each Barrister in the revision; and the total cost incurred for the payment of such Revising Barristers, and the amount received by the Treasury from the Local Authorities in respect of such costs (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 208, of Session 1889)."—(*Mr. Hobhouse.*)

PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES.

Address for—

"Return showing, with regard to each Parliamentary Constituency in the United Kingdom, the number of Electors on the Register now in force (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 179, of Session 1889)."—(*Mr. Thomas Ellis.*)

EAST INDIA (CANTONMENT ACTS).

Address for—

"Copy of Cantonment Acts, 1889, and any Rules made under Section 26, Sub-section 21, and under Section 27 of the same."—(*Mr. John Ellis.*)

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN CONSTITUTION BILL.

That they do request that this House will be pleased to communicate to their Lordships a Copy of the Report, &c., of the Select Committee appointed by this House in the present Session of Parliament on the Western Australia Constitution Bill.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

Return ordered, "Showing, by Counties, all Cases where a deduction has been made during the year ended the 31st day of August, 1889, under Art. 114:—

Name of School, with denomination.	Average attendance.	Income from fees and sale of books.	Nett income from Grant.	Income from subscriptions or rates.	Income from endowment.	Amount of deduction under Article 114.

Summary.

Schools with no income from subscriptions:—

Number of schools .. ..
Average attendance .. ..
Total nett grant .. ..
Total deductions under Art. 114 .. .. ..

Schools with an income from subscriptions not exceeding 2s. 6d. a head:—

Number of schools .. ..
Average attendance .. ..
Total nett grant .. ..
Total deduction under Art. 114 .. .. ..
Total income from subscriptions .. .. ..

Schools with an income from subscriptions of 2s. 7d. to 5s. a head, inclusive:—

Number of schools .. ..
Average attendance .. ..
Total nett grant .. ..
Total deductions under Art. 114 .. .. ..
Total income from subscriptions .. .. ..

Schools with an income from subscriptions of 5s. 1d. to 7s. 6d. a head, inclusive:—

Number of schools .. ..
Average attendance .. ..
Total nett grant .. ..
Total deductions under Art. 114 .. .. ..
Total income from subscriptions .. .. ..

Schools with an income from subscriptions of 7s. 7d. to 10s. a head, inclusive:—

Number of schools .. ..
Average attendance .. ..
Total nett grant .. ..
Total deductions under Art. 114 .. .. ..
Total income from subscriptions .. .. ..

Schools with an income from subscriptions of over 10s. a head:—

Number of schools .. ..
Average attendance .. ..
Total nett grant .. ..
Total deductions under Art. 114 .. .. ..
Total income from subscriptions .. .. ..

—(*Mr. Mundella.*)

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

Return ordered, "For all Public Elementary Schools examined during the year ending 31st day of August, 1889, giving—

Name and denomination of School.	Number of scholars for whom accommodation is provided.	Average attendance	Income from fees and books.	Income from subscription or rates.	Income from endowment.	Income from Parliamentary Grant.

"Any school receiving a grant for more or less than a twelvemonth to be marked with an asterisk."—(*Mr. Mundella.*)

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.

MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can now state what is the result of the consideration which, in August last, he promised the Treasury would give to the question of how to meet the claims of the attendants and messengers at the South Kensington Museum to receive the same benefits of superannuation as are enjoyed by men doing similar work in kindred Government Departments?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): I am not in a position to state the actual result of the consideration which I have given for many months past to this question, but I may say that I have made a suggestion which I hope will dispose of the matter.

ALLEGED LEPROSY IN AN EMIGRANT SHIP.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been directed to the case of leprosy in a Swedish emigrant, as reported in the *Liverpool Courier* of 22nd May; whether the woman in question was permitted to land in and pass through England, to pass the examination of the Medical Emigration Officers of Health at Liverpool at their survey of the Cunard steamer *Cephalonia* on the 17th April last, and the second inspection at Queenstown by an officer of the same Department; whether it is true that the woman in question was not allowed to land by the Port Authorities in Boston, U.S.A., after inspection by their Medical Inspector and several eminent American scientists, who declared the case to be one of genuine leprosy; and that the Cunard Company were, in consequence, compelled to bring her back to England; if it is true that on her arrival in Liverpool she was conveyed to the Brownlow Hill Workhouse, and there examined, as reported in the *Liverpool Weekly Mercury*—

> "by Dr. Hope, Assistant Medical Officer of Health for the city, Dr. Hill, the Board of Trade Officer, and Dr. Robertson, who entertained little doubt that the case was one of leprosy,"

and made special arrangements for her complete isolation; whether such isolation was effected on board the Cunard steamship on either passage; what has been done with the patient; and whether any steps will be taken to prevent the loathsome and infectious disease in question, as well as other contagious and infectious diseases difficult of detection, being propagated in consequence of the present system of inspection by Medical Board of Trade Inspectors?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The woman in question was permitted to land at Hull and pass through England. The Board of Trade have no statutory authority to examine passengers arriving in this country from abroad. The woman did pass the examination of the Medical Emigration Officers at Liverpool before embarking upon the Cunard steamship *Cephalonia*. These officers regarded the case as one of lupus of a non-contagious character; she brought with her a medical certificate to that effect. She had a husband and six children in America whom she was going to join; and my officers did not think there was sufficient justification for preventing her proceeding in the ship, but, in consequence of her appearance, it was required that she and her immediate party should be kept in one compartment, isolated from the rest of the passengers. The woman was not re-inspected by the Medical Officer of the Board of Trade at Queenstown; such re-inspection would be unusual. I learn from the Cunard Company that this passenger was allowed to land at Boston and remain on shore for 12 days, and that she was returned, not so much on account of the disease, as that her husband could not pay for her maintenance in hospital. She was isolated as a matter of precaution on her passage home, and her apartments were afterwards thoroughly fumigated, stripped, and disinfected, and she was sent by the Cunard Company to her home in Sweden, accompanied by a special attendant. On passing through Liverpool the patient was, I understand, taken to the Brownlow Hill Workhouse, where she was visited, unofficially, by the two Medical Officers of the Board of Trade who had previously examined her. These officers report that her later symptoms had more of the appearance of leprosy, as understood by them. Every precaution is taken by the Board of Trade and its officers to prevent, as far as possible, the propagation of contagious and infectious diseases. It is to the interest of all steamship companies carrying passengers to immediately isolate any suspicious case that may break out during the voyage, and subsequently fumigate, disinfect, and paint any space occupied by such a case, and I am informed that this was done in this particular case.

DR. TANNER: Does not this case exemplify the necessity of taking steps to give more power to the medical officers on board steamers of rejecting certain passengers, and thereby protecting the rest from any infection which may be promulgated in consequence of the defective Board of Trade arrangements?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I do not think this case exemplifies anything of the kind, nor do I believe that the present arrangements are defective.

DR. TANNER: Am I to understand that a case of leprosy—one of the worst diseases in the world—is to be looked upon so lightly that Englishmen, and passengers generally, on board a steamship may be exposed to such an infection?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No, Sir. As I have already explained, the case was considered to be one of lupus, and not of leprosy; but care was taken even then to guard against its spreading.

DR. TANNER: Will the right hon. Gentleman communicate with the American Authorities as to whether this was not a case of leprosy passed by the Board of Trade but rejected by the American Authorities?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No, Sir, I will not.

DR. TANNER: It is perfectly notorious.

FORTROSE ACADEMY.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether it is the case that the School Board of Rosemarkie contemplate removing the old academy at Fortrose from its present freehold site to a feu at a distance from the teachers' dwelling-house; at whose expense, whether ratepayers or endowment, is the new school to be built; whether the new school is to be an ordinary Board school or a higher class public school; whether the same is to be vested in and under the management of the School Board as a Board school, or in name of the School Board as the Governing Body of the endowment; whether the School Board have obtained the sanction of the Department to the contemplated change; and what is the cost of the proposed removal?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Bute): The School Board of Rosemarkie propose to remove the academy to another site which the Board hold to be more eligible. The question of the tenure upon which the new site is held is not one which comes under their Lordship's cognisance, but there is no objection to the erection of a Board school on a feu. The School Board is the Governing Body of the endowment, and the question of the form in which the new school is to be vested is one on which they will doubtless be guided by their legal adviser. The Board propose to raise a loan of £1,850 on the security of the rates for the purpose, and have obtained the sanction of the Department to that loan.

THE PUNJAB.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Secretary of State has any information respecting the action of the police in certain cases which are reported to have occurred in Amritsar, a city in the Punjab, with a population of over 150,000; whether, under the Punjab Police Act, or any other law in India, it is permissible for the Police Authorities to keep descriptive rolls of parties who have been in prison, and, while these parties are at liberty and are charged with no offence, to subject their persons to rigorous examination in the public streets; whether certain girls were so examined in public places in Lahore; whether he is aware that a girl named Vid Koer was thus examined in a public bazaar, and that, in consequence of this treatment, she absconded, was found by the police, detained in custody, and not allowed to see her parents or to be released until she signed an agreement denying the examination of her person in public, although the examination was witnessed by many people who are ready to testify thereto; whether he is aware that a Brahmin girl, aged 20, named Dhau Deir, was, against her protest, and in spite of her cries, taken into a public street and examined, no occasion for this as regards wrongdoing on her part being even alleged; whether he can state how men and women have been so examined, and whether the particulars of such examinations are contained in descriptive rolls in the Police Register; who is the officer responsible for these occurrences; whether he has been punished in any way; and whether an

inquiry has been instituted, and, if the inquiry is simply of a Departmental kind, whether the Secretary of State will give instructions for an independent and thorough investigation?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): No, Sir. My noble Friend the Secretary of State has no official information that enables him to instruct me to answer the question. The matter will be referred to the Government of India in the usual way.

PAYMENTS TO ANGLO-INDIAN NEWSPAPERS.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Government of India have made any payments, and for what purposes, to, and which of, the Anglo-Indian newspapers published in India; whether it was with the knowledge or approval of the Secretary of State that an offer was made to the *Times of India*, a newspaper published at Bombay, as stated in a leading article in that journal, "to become the official organ of the Government of India;" whether the proprietor of the *Times of India* is correct in saying that, in answer to such offer, he gave "so clear and distinct a negative as to admit of no misconception;" and whether the Secretary of State will lay upon the Table the correspondence relating to this matter?

SIR J. GORST: In answer to the first paragraph of the hon. Member's question, I have to say that, except payments for advertisements, the Secretary of State is not aware of any payments being made by the Government to Anglo-Indian newspapers. The answer to the second paragraph is in the negative. In reply to paragraph No. 3, the Secretary of State is not aware of any such occurrence arising, or statement being made. In answer to the last paragraph, I have to say that there is no correspondence, and therefore none can be produced.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Am I to understand from the right hon. Gentleman that the statement made in the *Times of India* is not correct?

SIR J. GORST: The Secretary of State for India is not aware that the *Times of India* has ever made such a statement.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I will supply the right hon. Gentleman with it.

PUBLIC HOUSES IN BURNLEY.

MR. SUMMERS (Huddersfield): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that about two years ago a Census was taken of the public houses and beer houses in the Parliamentary Borough of Burnley, which proved that, out of 177 houses of this description, 165 were "tied houses," whilst only 12 were free; whether there is reason to believe that a similar state of things exists in other boroughs and counties in the United Kingdom; and whether, if the Inland Revenue Department possesses no information on this subject, he will cause inquiry to be made?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): No, Sir; I have no information as to the Census to which the hon. Member refers, and I have no knowledge whether the state of things said to exist in Burnley applies to the rest of the United Kingdom. As at present advised, I am doubtful whether officers of the Inland Revenue have a *locus standi* to institute an inquiry into what is a matter of private contract.

EDUCATION OF THE BLIND AND DEAF.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education if he can now state when the English and Scotch Bills for the education of the blind and deaf will be introduced?

*THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): The Scotch Bill is down for Second Reading in the other House this afternoon, and the English Bill will be introduced there as soon as certain questions of some difficulty that have arisen in connection with it are disposed of.

THE CENSUS.

MR. WOODALL (Hanley): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board when the Bill authorising the Decennial Census will be brought in; whether the Departmental Committee, relative to the Census, have made their Report; and whether it is intended to present the Report to Parliament?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am not in a position at present to give any information as to the date when the Bill authorising the next Census will be brought in. The Departmental Committee referred to have made their Report, and it is under the consideration of the Government. The Report will shortly be presented to Parliament.

CHURCH RATE IN WAPPING.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the statement made to Mr. Mead, the Police Magistrate sitting at Thames Street, that for many years past it has been the practice in the parish of Wapping to serve notices demanding a voluntary Church Rate on the same form as is used for the general, sewers, and poor rates, and that the Magistrate has expressed the opinion that many persons have paid the rate, believing that they were compelled to do so; whether in other parishes voluntary Church Rates are collected in a similar way; and whether the Local Government Board will take steps to prevent Local Authorities applying for voluntary Church Rates by means liable to produce the impression that the payment of them is compulsory?

*MR. RITCHIE: My attention has not been called to the statement made to Mr. Mead, the Police Magistrate at Thames Street, that for many years past it has been the practice of the parish of Wapping to serve notices demanding a voluntary Church Rate on the same form as is used for the general, sewers, and poor rates. I have no information as to other parishes in which voluntary Church Rates are collected in a similar way. The Local Government Board have no jurisdiction as regards the form in which the General and Sewer Rates are levied in the Metropolis. The Board, however, concur in the opinion that the including of a voluntary rate in the forms of demand note for the Poor Rate or other rate levied under statutory authority is open to much objection. The views of the Board on this subject are communicated to the officers concerned, where they learn that the practice referred to has existed.

THE MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT.

MR. MUNDELLA: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies if it is true that the Government of the Bahamas has refused its consent to the adoption of the Merchandise Marks Act; and whether he will lay the correspondence upon the Table?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): The Government of the Bahamas has twice introduced into the House of Assembly, Bills corresponding to the Merchandise Marks Act, but has failed to carry them. It seems hardly worth while to lay the correspondence on the Table; but the right hon. Gentleman would perhaps call at the Colonial Office and see it, and then consider if the presentation is really desirable.

THE CITY LIVERY COMPANIES.

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Livery Companies of the City of London are gradually realising their property; and, in particular, that 30 acres of land at Barking, constituting Morell's Charity of the Goldsmiths' Company, have been sold, and that another property of the same Company, namely, a portion of Messrs. Glyn and Company's premises in Lombard Street, has been conveyed away to that firm for £85,000; and whether, in these circumstances, he will take steps to act upon the first recommendation of the Royal Commission of the City of London Livery Companies, which was as follows:—

> "We think that the Companies should be placed by Act of Parliament under such restrictions as regards the alienation of their real and personal estate as would remove all danger of the loss of any portion of their property."

*MR. RITCHIE: My attention has not been called to the fact that the Livery Companies of the City of London are gradually realising their property. As regards the two instances to which the hon. Member calls my attention, I may mention that I have this morning received a communication from the Clerk

of the Goldsmiths' Company, in which he states that no part of the 30 acres of land at Barking has been sold, nor has such a sale been under consideration. The price which was obtained for the house in Lombard Street sold to Messrs. Glyn is stated to have far exceeded any price ever previously obtained for property in the City. The purchase was made with the approval of the Charity Commissioners, and the money was invested in the name of the Official Trustee of Charitable Funds. I cannot undertake to propose legislation such as that suggested.

THE DENBIGHSHIRE CHARITIES.

MR. T. ELLIS (Merionethshire): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Penrith (Mr. J. W. Lowther) whether the Report of the Charity Commissioners' Inquiry into the endowed charities of Denbighshire is ready for publication; and whether, in accordance with the desire of several County Councils, the Inquiry can be extended into other Welsh counties?

MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): The inquiries into all the parishes of Denbighshire have been completed, and the Reports on all the parishes except four have now been received, and the Commissioners are engaged in completing the information necessary to enable them to present these Reports to Parliament. The Commissioners understand that the Treasury desires to have an opportunity of considering these Reports before authorising expenditure in respect of further like inquiries in other counties.

MR. T. ELLIS: Will the Commissioners hasten the publication of the Report?

MR. J. W. LOWTHER: We are anxious to do everything we can to hasten the publication of the Report; but, as the hon. Gentleman is aware, the matter rests with the Assistant Commissioner, who has been very much occupied since he had charge of the matter; but I believe he is now giving his attention to it, and I trust that it will soon be carried through.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS OFFICE, IRELAND.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, with reference to the alleged increased business and insufficient staff in the Registry of Deeds Office, Ireland, whether his attention has been called to the letter of Mr. James T. Ellis, Public Record Searcher, which appeared in the *Freeman's Journal*, of 8th May last; whether, as therein stated, the number of deeds registered for the five years, 1880 to end of 1884, was 78,900, and for the five years, 1885-9, the number was 81,600; whether he is aware that of the 2,700 deeds registered in excess of the number given for the previous five years, the greater portion is made up of Land Commission Deeds, which, owing to the number of granting parties, involve greatly increased work in the preparation of index books; whether it is correct, as stated by Mr. Ellis, that in the six index letters quoted in his letter there are 797 pages for the five years ending 1884, snd that this number increased to 1,252 for the five years ending 1889; at what date will the consolidated indexes for the years 1880-89 be available for public use; and whether, considering the complaints which are made as to the insufficient staff, he will have it adequately increased, or have the seven hours' scheme of attendance applied?

Mr. JACKSON: My attention had not been called to Mr. Ellis's letter until this question was put on the Paper. Mr. Ellis, though described as a Public Record Searcher, has, I believe, no official connection with the Registry of Deeds. The duties of the Registry and the staff required for their performance formed the subject of inquiry by a thoroughly competent Committee in 1885, and the present staff is considerably in excess of the number which the Committee recommended as sufficient for the proper discharge of all the work of the Department. There is no intention to increase the number of the staff; but I hope that the rule requiring a regular daily attendance of seven hours in the Registry will be very shortly introduced. I cannot say when the consolidated indices for the period from 1880 to 1889 will be completed; but I am not satisfied with the progress which has been made since 1885, nor am I satisfied that the work of the Office is discharged as promptly as it could be. I am considering the best means of securing the completion of these indices, and if it be found necessary to afford some temporary assistance in order to effect this object at an early date the Treasury will give the necessary sanction.

PUBLIC WORKS LOAN (TRAMWAYS, IRELAND) ACT.

Mr. SUMMERS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the power which was conferred upon the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland by the "Public Works Loan (Tramways, Ireland) Act" of 1886, to make advances upon the security of their fully paid-up shares to any public company which had, at the time of passing the said Act, or within 12 months thereafter obtained an Order in Council, has been withdrawn by a Treasury Minute; and, if so, when was it withdrawn, and for what reason?

Mr. JACKSON: The power in question was given to meet a special and temporary difficulty which has passed away, and the Treasury has decided that it is not desirable or necessary to make further loans under the Act quoted.

Mr. SUMMERS: What was the date of the Minute?

Mr. JACKSON: I did not say there was any Treasury Minute.

LIGHT RAILWAYS.

Mr. DALTON (Donegal, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what is the cause of the delay in granting the sum of £116,000 recommended so strongly by the Light Railway Commissioners, and approved of unanimously by the Grand Jury of County Donegal at the last Spring Assizes, in favour of the Stranorlar and Glenties Line?

A LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. Maxwell, Wigton): It is not possible for me at present to state the result of the consideration of the various railway schemes in Donegal.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): As the matter is of public interest, and large sums of money have already been invested by contractors in initiating schemes, will the Government be soon in a condition to announce what course will be taken?

Sir H. MAXWELL: I must ask the hon. and learned Gentleman to put his question to my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury.

ASSAULT UPON IRISH CONSTABLES.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the report in the *Freeman's Journal* of 27th May last, of the proceedings of a trial before two Resident Magistrates at Portumna, in which five men of the district were charged with having committed a riotous assault on two constables named O'Gowan and M'Grady, and two emergency men, when the charges against all the accused were dismissed; whether he has seen the evidence which shows that the constables and the emergency men had been drinking together from the morning of the day on which the alleged offence was committed; that Constable M'Gowan at the trial denied some of the statements which he had sworn in the deposition previously made by him; that Constable O'Grady at Mrs. Kelly's yard fired off his rifle loaded with buckshot, and M'Gowan and he attacked the accused with their rifles; that the emergency man Kingsbury struck the accused Dewin with a loaded whip; and that Kingsbury admitted at the trial that he had been previously fined for drunkenness, and also for firing off a revolver in the public road; and what steps he intends to take with reference to the conduct of the constables and the emergency men on this occasion?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): It is the fact that the Magistrates dismissed the case, partly on a point of law, and partly on account of the nature of the evidence.

THE INCIDENCE OF IRISH TAXATION.

MR. MARUM (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been directed to the proceedings before Colonel Dunne's Select Committee upon Irish Taxation (1864), wherein complaint was made in regard to the narrowness of the scope of the Inquiry, resulting in an incomplete Report, and furthermore, that serious questions of law arose as to the true construction of the Union Statute, 1800; and whether Her Majesty's Government are prepared to frame the terms of the Order of Reference to the proposed Select Committee upon the above subject wide enough to embrace the question of the competency of the high contracting parties, or at least one of them, to enter into Articles of Union outside its legislative function and involving its own annihilation, without a *plébiscite* or other cognate authorisation from its electorate; the question of the original justness of the proportions of financial contributions therein; and inquiry into the causes that before and since the Union period have occasioned a want of uniformity in the incrementation of the value of the realty and taxable basis of Ireland as an integral portion of the Empire relatively to the rest of the United Kingdom; with power, if deemed expedient, to examine legal experts, and to suggest ways and means whereby relief may be afforded to the Irish taxpayer without trenching upon the British ratepayer?

MR. GOSCHEN: Yes, Sir; my attention has been called to Colonel Dunne's Committee. Whatever complaints were made with regard to the narrowness of the scope of that Inquiry, it was sufficiently comprehensive, at any rate, to employ the Committee for two years, and to result in an incomplete Report, as the hon. Member points out. I do not propose to include questions of history in the terms of the Reference, as I consider that this would not lead to any practical result, and would probably postpone the Report to an indefinite period. The intention of the Government is to secure a practical investigation into the present incidence of taxation in Ireland, and its relation to the taxation of the rest of the United Kingdom.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): When will the terms of Reference be placed on the Table?

MR. GOSCHEN: I have been engaged upon the Reference, and I hope to be able to place it on the Table of the House in the course of a few days. We are anxious to obtain the assent of right hon. Gentlemen opposite to it.

HIGHER DIVISION CLERKS.

MR. R. POWER (Waterford): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the number of Higher Division Clerks is in certain Departments considerably in excess of requirements under the present classification of the Service;

and whether, in view of the fact that all re-organisation has been rendered practically impossible by the Resolution adopted on the 12th of June, 1888, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to give the House an opportunity of again considering the matter, with the view of enabling them to fix establishments on a proper scale without further delay?

MR. GOSCHEN: In June, 1888, a Motion was moved in this House condemnatory of the principle upon which pensions had been awarded to public officers retiring upon re-organisation of office. The Government, admitting the necessity of care on such occasions, asked the House to adopt an Amendment on the Original Resolution to the effect that—

> "This House, whilst of opinion that, when the re-organisation of a Department becomes necessary, full inquiry should be made into the wants of other Departments with a view to the continued employment of redundant officers, is not prepared, pending the inquiry of the Royal Commission upon Civil Service Establishments, to anticipate its Report by laying down any absolute rule as to the provision of employment for persons not required in the Department to which they have been originally appointed."

The House, however, declined to accept this Amendment, and resolved that the re-organisations in the Accountant General's and Secretary's Department of the Admiralty had been injurious, and that in any further re-organisation officials who are still able and willing to render service for the public money shall be provided with employment in other Departments instead of being forced to become useless burdens on the country. It must, of course, be understood that when the House of Commons takes questions of administration into its own hands, and decides against the advice of the Government, it acts with the intention that effect shall be given to its decision. The Government, in consequence, have been and are loyally carrying out the Resolution, and are insisting on the continued employment of officers while they are able to serve. Further, the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments has reported that the provision in the Superannuation Act, which permits addition to be made to the pension of an officer on the abolition of his office, has given rise to great abuse, and they recommended the immediate repeal of the provision. In presence of the Resolution of the House and the recommendation of the Commissioners, the Government do not consider it their duty to take action in the direction suggested by the hon. Member.

THE EDINBURGH ARTILLERY MILITIA.

MR. LEES (Oldham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that many of the men of the Edinburgh Artillery Militia now under canvas at Barry Links, Forfarshire, are unprovided with great coats; whether many of them are also unprovided with straw for bedding, but are only allowed two blankets apiece; whether these men have suffered considerably from the coldness of the nights; and whether he will instruct the proper authorities to supply them with great coats and bedding, or additional blankets?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The General Officer commanding reports that 20 great coats were deficient. A demand for these was received at the Army Clothing Depôt on the 9th, and they were sent on the following day. The tents were for four nights unsupplied with straw, through some mistake, although the straw was at hand; but the men have had their regulation supply of blankets and waterproof sheets, and no complaints were made to the General commanding.

AN ENGLISHMAN KILLED BY AN ITALIAN SENTRY.

MR. COGHILL (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is true that an Englishman has been fired upon and killed by an Italian sentry at Genoa; what were the circumstances which led to his being fired upon; and what steps Her Majesty's Government propose to take in the matter?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): A Report has been made by Her Majesty's Consul that a fireman belonging to a British steamer lying in the port had been shot dead by a sentry posted on one of the batteries. The Consul has been informed by the General in Command that the sentry asserted that he had repeatedly challenged the man, who continued to advance upon his post, and was shot at a distance of a few paces from him. The man had got out of his direct way back to his ship, and his conduct cannot be explained. The matter has been referred to Her Majesty's Ambassador, whose Report we are awaiting.

SEA FISHERIES OF SCOTLAND.

Mr. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith, &c.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he can yet inform the House when the Bill in relation to the Sea Fisheries in Scotland will be introduced, or whether it will be printed this Session; and when the Report of the Salmon Fishery Commissioners for Scotland will be laid upon the Table?

*Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: The Bill will be introduced very shortly in another place, and the Report referred to will, I believe, be circulated in a few days.

SCOTCH PARISH BOUNDARIES.

Mr. W. P. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if it is within the powers of the Boundary Commissioners appointed under "The Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1889," when inquiring into the circumstances of parishes which have no detached parts, to detach a portion of the parish for the purpose of adding it to another parish, or whether the reference to the alteration of boundaries in Section 49 of this Act refers only to such parishes as have detached parts?

Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: I would rather not make abstract statements on a subject on which the Boundaries Commissioners are at present dealing with individual cases. I may say, however, that where a parish which has no detached parts is situated in more than one county the Boundary Commissioners are empowered to detach a portion of it and add it to another parish, so as to secure that a parish shall not be in more than one county.

HARBOURS OF REFUGE ON THE WELSH COAST.

Mr. T. ELLIS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, having regard to the fact that between Holyhead and Milford Haven there is no port or harbour of refuge into which a boat drawing eight feet six inches of water can run at all states of the tide; that the absence of such harbour accommodation seriously cripples the success of fishing and trawling on that coast, and occasions serious loss of life every year, he will appoint a Departmental Committee to visit Fishguard, Aberystwith, Aberdovey, Barmouth, St. Tudwell's and other places, to inquire what steps could and should be taken for the further protection of the lives and industry of fishermen and traders along the Welsh coast?

*Sir M. HICKS BEACH: The hon. Member's question appears to have reference chiefly to fishing harbours, and I would refer him to the terms of the Treasury Minute of the 4th of May, 1887, which has been communicated to the House. If the Local Authorities of the districts to which the hon. Member refers could unite in promoting the construction of a harbour at any particular place, their object might be attained by their making an application under the provisions of the Treasury Minute to which I have referred; but I cannot appoint a Departmental Committee for the purpose suggested by the hon. Member, as I think this would hold out hopes which could not be realised.

HOSPITAL DUES AT SMYRNA.

Colonel HILL (Bristol, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is now able to state what arrangements have been decided upon with respect to the collection of hospital dues at the ports of Constantinople and Smyrna?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: The final arrangements have not yet been decided on. They are still under consideration.

INJURY TO CONSTABLES AT TIPPERARY.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in the case of the two constables injured in Tipperary, the injuries were inflicted before 1st July, 1889, and the presentments made by the Grand Jury on the 15th July, 1889; and whether these dates were previous to the inauguration of the combination on the Smith-Barry estate?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It appears that the two constables referred to as having obtained compensation received it in respect of injuries inflicted in March, 1889. I was, therefore, in error in the statement I made on Monday about these two men. I am informed that two other policemen, named Curran and Keating, were injured subsequent to the inauguration of the conspiracy on the Smith-Barry estate. I have inquired into the character of their injuries, but have not had time to receive a reply. Perhaps the hon. Member will ask a question later.

MR. DILLON: Has any policeman got compensation for injuries since the beginning of the combination on the Smith-Barry estate?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I rather think not, Sir.

CHARGE AGAINST A TIPPERARY CONSTABLE.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. John Maher, of Lorrha, County Tipperary, has reported to the Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary that Sergeant Lord, of the Lorrha Constabulary Station, had refused to pay him an amount due to him, and had forged a receipt for the same, and had sent in the forged receipt to his superior officer as a voucher that he had paid the money; whether Mr. Maher has also reported the case to the local District Inspector; and what action has been taken (or will be taken) in reference to this charge of forgery and fraud made against this police sergeant?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that the man referred to has put forward a claim for some shillings for car-hire alleged by him to be due since 1888. The local officer has inquired into the case, but cannot find that there is any ground for the claim.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Is it intended to proceed against this man for forgery and fraud?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If there is a *bonâ fide* charge, there will be no difficulty in taking proceedings.

MR. SEXTON: I shall ask a further question on this subject.

LIMERICK HARBOUR ENGINEER.

MR. O'KEEFFE (Limerick City): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland if he has read the report of the election of harbour engineer for the Port of Limerick, held on Monday last, and if it is legal that representatives publicly elected by a constituency consisting of importers and exporters, and by delegates from the Limerick Corporation, in accordance with an Act of Parliament, could legally proceed to such election by ballot; and whether Sir James Spaight, who assumed to preside at such meeting, as President of the Limerick Chamber of Commerce, was entitled to give two votes on such election?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): The subject of this question is one upon which I have no official information; but even if I had the means of obtaining such information, I must point out that the question is one upon which I ought not to give an opinion, relating as it does to the legality of an election which will, I presume, if disputed, be tested in the usual way.

BREWERS OWNING PUBLIC HOUSES.

MR. SUMMERS: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the local valuation lists and rate books give the names of the owners as well as of the occupiers of all rateable hereditaments; and, if so, whether he will cause a Return to be prepared of the number of public houses owned by brewers in each city, municipal borough, and Petty Sessional Division, respectively, in England and Wales, in each of the years from 1880 to 1890?

*MR. RITCHIE: The valuation lists usually give the names of the occupiers and owners of the rateable hereditaments in a parish at the time when the lists are made up, but they are not corrected as regards these particulars when changes occur, and they do not distinguish the owners who are brewers. They would not be available for such a Return as is suggested. With respect to the rate books, the names of the owners at the time of making the rate should be entered in the rate book; but it too often happens that the parochial officers are not very careful to obtain accurate information as to the owners of the hereditaments when the rates are collected from the occupiers. As in the case of the valuation lists, the rate books do not distinguish the cases where the owners are brewers. To obtain a Return from the rate books merely of the public houses in England and Wales, it would be necessary to apply to the overseers of all the parishes in the country, which number nearly 15,000. The overseers are unpaid officers, and in a large number of cases they have no paid assistants. It is quite certain that a Return of this character could not be obtained unless payment were made for its preparation; and even if payment were made, many months would elapse before it could be completed, and, when completed, its accuracy could not be relied upon.

CORK LUNATIC ASYLUM.

Dr. TANNER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the manner in which the Governors of the Cork Lunatic Asylum are said to have shelved the Report of Messrs. Plunkett, O'Farrell, and T. J. M. Courtenay, Inspectors of Lunatic Asylums; whether the Board of Governors refused to give the Report to the Press until "they had considered;" whether it is true the Report suggested many reforms, and made serious complaints as to the want of personal cleanliness allowed to exist with regard to some of its inmates, and also as to the sanitary arrangements in certain parts of the house; and whether the Inspectors stated that, in their opinion, the Board had not properly attended to the wants of the patients; and what is the number of patients at present in the asylum?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Inquiries are being made, and I must ask the hon. Gentleman to put the question down again.

Dr. TANNER: I will put it down to-morrow.

DELAGOA BAY RAILWAY.

Mr. MURDOCH (Reading): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any proposal has been received from the Portuguese Government, offering to submit to the arbitration of certain European nations

Mr. Ritchie

the question of the Delagoa Bay Railway Company?

Sir J. FERGUSSON: A joint proposal of that character has been made by Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the United States, America to the Government of Portugal, who have accepted it in principle.

THE POLICE AND PUBLIC MEETING.

Dr. TANNER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether District Inspector Concannon on Thursday, the 5th June, endeavoured to introduce a police reporter into a meeting held in the Corn Exchange, Cork, convened by the Mayor of the City for the purpose of promoting a testimonial to a member of the Cork Town Council; what reasons are given by the police for endeavouring to intrude on such a gathering; and whether any remonstrance will be addressed to Mr. Concannon for exceeding his duty?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that the District Inspector asked the Mayor if a reporter would be admitted, and on the Mayor replying No, nothing further occurred. The meeting was convened for the purpose of starting a testimonial to a person undergoing imprisonment in connection with boycotting.

Dr. TANNER: Am I to understand the right hon. Gentleman, because a person is in prison and his friends outside get up a testimonial, this detestable practice of shadowing these people is to be persisted in? Has not the right hon. Gentleman learned better?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

THE LAND PURCHASE BILL.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the resolution unanimously adopted by the Newtownards Farmers' Association, at a meeting held on the 26th May last; and whether he intends to make provision in his Land Purchase Bill in the direction pointed out in this resolution?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman asked me this question the other day. I then stated that the resolution had not been brought to my notice, and I have not yet seen it. If the hon. Gentleman will be good enough to forward me a copy of it I shall be very glad.

MR. M'CARTAN: I may say I did forward a copy.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I regret I have not received it.

OVERTIME AT CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE.

MR. M'CARTAN: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he will state the number of hours overtime performed by telegraph operatives in the Central Telegraph Office during the week ending 7th June instant; also, how many hours overtime performed at the same office during the first week of June, 1889; whether clerks there have been threatened with penal consequences for refusing to work overtime from 12 noon, although their duties were from 5 p.m. to 2 a.m.; whether, notwithstanding that every available officer was pressed on overtime duty, telegrams are often delayed for nearly an hour owing to the insufficient staff; and whether, having regard to this delay, and to the exceptional strain which long hours entails on the clerks, he will consider the desirability of increasing the staff at the Central Telegraph Office?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University): The number of hours overtime performed in the Central Telegraph Office during the week ended the 7th instant was 10,260, and during the corresponding week of last year 10,037. The work in this week is exceptionally heavy, and the amount of overtime is, therefore, correspondingly high. It is spread over a force of about 2,400 persons. In one or two instances telegraphists who have demurred to render assistance in times of extreme pressure have been informed that it would be necessary to consider the question of removing them from the duty extending from 5 p.m. to 2 a.m. to make way for those upon whose help the Department might rely, and it is, perhaps, to this that the hon. Member refers as being a threat of penal consequences. I may mention that the duty in question is only performed five days a week. It is not the fact that telegrams are often delayed to the extent mentioned by the hon. Member. Some delay has, however, occurred on a few of the circuits, owing to the extreme pressure, and, in view of the amount of overtime performed, it has been in contemplation to make an early application for authority to increase the staff.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE POST OFFICE.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he will state the full particulars about the punishment of postmen in London for attending the meeting of their trade on Clerkenwell Green, 16th May; how many were punished; how many were fined; how many deprived of their stripes; if he will state whether it is the intention of the Department to dismiss the men who refuse to give a written declaration that they will not attend Union meetings in future; and if he will state definitely whether or no postmen are allowed to form a Union?

*MR. RAIKES: In reply to the hon. Member I have to state that certain postmen having, in defiance not only of the established regulations, but of a special warning which had been addressed to them only a few days before, thought fit to attend a meeting on Clerkenwell Green, which did not comply with the Rules of the Service, I felt constrained to vindicate the authority of the Department. Altogether 31 men have been punished by fine, and of this number eight have been deprived of their good conduct stripes. Obviously a distinction which, as its name implies, is given for good conduct, cannot continue to be worn by those who defy regulations. As regards those of the 31 who are under suspension, the intention of the Department is to restore them to duty as soon as they give satisfactory assurances for their good behaviour. Their restoration, therefore, as the hon. Member will see, is in their own hands. Postmen are at liberty to form associations for their mutual benefit, or for the discussion of matters in which they have a common interest, so long as they do not transgress regulations or organise resistance to the authority of their superior officers.

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): Are punishments of this kind imposed in other branches of the Civil Service for similar offences?

*MR. RAIKES: I have not inquired into that.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): Will the right hon. Gentleman explain in what respect the meeting on Clerkenwell Green did not comply with the Rules of the Service?

*MR. RAIKES: I think that the House is aware that under the rules as to the holding of meetings, men who propose to attend them are requested to give notice of their intention to hold such meetings; that such meetings should and are to be, confined to persons in the Postal Service; and that, if it is thought necessary, the authorities should be able to have their official shorthand writer present.

MR. CONYBEARE: As this was an open-air meeting on Clerkenwell Green, I should like to ask whether the regulations will not absolutely preclude all postmen from attending an open-air meeting, and whether that is a fair construction of the rules?

*MR. RAIKES: No, that is not a fair construction of the rules; but it would be quite competent for the postmen to hold an open-air meeting if they complied with the rules—*i.e.*, if they gave notice of their intention to hold the meeting; if they gave satisfactory assurance that the meeting would be confined to persons in the Postal Service, and if the shorthand writer was present.

MR. CONYBEARE: Did the postmen on this occasion raise any difficulty or suggest any refusal to have an official reporter as a representative of the Postmaster-General at this meeting?

*MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): In order to make this matter clear to the country will the right hon. Gentleman state whether this meeting, for attending which these men have been suspended and punished, was held out of their working hours?

*MR. RAIKES: In answer to the last question I presume, at all events, that the meeting took place out of the working hours of such postmen as attended, but not, of course, out of the regular working hours of the whole Service. With regard to the first question, the men had not given the Department the opportunity of considering whether the presence of a shorthand writer would be required, because they gave no notice of their intention to hold a meeting.

SPURIOUS COINS.

MR. BOULNOIS (Marylebone, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the extensive circulation of spurious florins and shillings now going on in this country; and whether any steps can be taken to prevent such circulation?

MR. GOSCHEN: I am informed that there is no reason to believe that there is any considerable circulation of spurious florins and shillings.

MR. BOULNOIS: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that there is considerable uneasiness in the mind of the public, especially among the working classes, on the subject of certain jubilee coins now circulated, and will he make some statement to allay that uneasiness?

MR. GOSCHEN: I thought that the statement which I have just made would do so. There is no reason to believe that there is any serious circulation of any spurious jubilee coins.

*MR. KELLY (Camberwell, N.): Is it, or is it not, the fact that many poor people believe that numbers of these coins have been imported from Germany?

MR. GOSCHEN: I am not aware that jubilee shillings have been imported from Germany. I will ask the hon. Member to put down the question.

ALLEGED SLAUGHTER OF CHRISTIAN REFUGEES.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is now in the position to give the House any information regarding the reported slaughter by Arnauts, with the connivance of the Turkish Authorities, of a number of Christian refugees in the neighbourhood of Kossova, in North West Macedonia, as they were endeavouring to make their way to Servia?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: No information has been received at the Foreign Office on the subject.

MR. BRYCE: Will the right. hon. Gentleman inquire? This is a very serious matter, for it is reported in the Continental papers that more than 80 persons were killed.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: As I have previously explained, it is impossible for Her Majesty's Representatives to report instantaneously on reports sent by telegraph to English newspapers. It is their duty to inquire into the accuracy of rumours before they report on them, as I am sure they will do in good time.

POSTAGE TO AUSTRALIA.

SIR G. BADEN POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether the Australian Governments have yet decided to adopt the reduction of the rate of postage to the United Kingdom to 2½d.; and, if so, whether they have attached any conditions to such decision?

*MR. RAIKES: I have much pleasure in informing my hon. Friend and the House that, according to a telegram received on the 29th of May, the majority of the Australian colonies, as represented in a Postal Conference at Adelaide, have announced their intention to adopt the reduced postage of 2½d. for letters to this country. They have, at the same time, made certain other proposals; but the telegram does not make it clear that their acceptance of the 2½d. rate is conditional on the adoption of these proposals, which are at present under discussion.

THE CABLE COMPANIES AND GOVERNMENT MESSAGES.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether the Australian Governments have made any suggestions to the Imperial Government as to taking part with them in any guarantee to Cable Companies against losses that may ensue on the proposed reduction of cable rates from 9s. 6d. to 4s. for public messages; and, if so, whether the Government has decided to comply with their suggestions, or to take any steps towards promoting this proposal?

MR. JACKSON: It is a fact that the principal Australian Governments have made a proposal that the Imperial Government should join them in payment of the subsidy now and for some time past paid by them to the company owning the Australian cables, and should also join in guaranteeing the company against half the loss which might accrue from the reduction of the cable rates to the figure mentioned. But, after very careful consideration, the Government has not been able to accede to the proposal.

THE EDUCATION CODE.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education if he will lay upon the Table of the House, and cause to be printed, a Paper showing the grounds on which he arrives at the estimate of £100,000 as the probable additional annual expenditure involved by the educational changes of this year, showing in detail the proportions of the excess due to the New Code, and to the Code Bill respectively?

*SIR W. HART DYKE: I have no objection, upon general grounds, to take the course suggested in my hon. Friend's question; but it must be understood that the figures will be an estimate only, and will merely show what we expect to be the immediate increase upon the present Vote.

SPHERES OF INFLUENCE IN AFRICA.

MR. A. E. PEASE (York): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether there is any substantial truth in the statement which appeared in the *St. James's Gazette*, of yesterday (11th June), purporting to give in detail the lines upon which a settlement either had been or was about to be arrived at between England and Germany respecting their spheres of influence in Africa?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: No statement can be made upon the point at present.

MR. E. W. BECKETT (York, N.R., Whitby): I should like to ask whether the Government are prepared to adhere to Lord Salisbury's declaration in the City that it is very undesirable to come to any agreement which we have not ascertained would be acceptable to the trading companies, missionaries, and others, who have advanced this great work; and whether the Government are still of opinion that this matter is one upon which the public opinion of England and Parliament ought to be consulted?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I am sure that the Prime Minister will adhere to any statement which he has publicly made. Further than that I cannot go.

THE STRAITS SETTLEMENTS.

MR. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it will be convenient to lay upon the Table of the House at an early date the Papers and Correspondence in reference to the additional military contribution proposed to be levied on the Straits Settlements ?

Baron H. de WORMS: This matter is still the subject of correspondence, and as soon as this is completed, Papers will be laid.

CONTEMPT OF COURT.

Mr. LEES (Oldham): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether his attention has been called to the case of Mr. Thomas Harrison, of Hollinwood, Oldham, who is now lying in Strangeways Prison, Manchester, for Contempt of Court; whether he is aware that Mr. Harrison has never committed any offence except in connection with the publication of a pamphlet entitled *The Coal Trade and Railway Rates*, reflecting upon the action of a Railway Company and certain colliery proprietors; whether the order for a writ of attachment against Mr. Harrison was made in Chambers instead of in open Court, and whether it is the law that a man may be committed for contempt otherwise than by an order made in open Court; whether Mr. Harrison is now detained in prison for a contempt for which he has already humbly apologised to the Court; and whether this is in accordance with the usual practice ?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. Webster, Isle of Wight): In answer to the question of the hon. Member, my attention had not been called to the case to which he refers; but I am informed that Mr. Harrison was restrained by injunction from publishing certain letters received by him from a Railway Company, and that with full knowledge of that injunction he proceeded to widely circulate a pamphlet containing the letters in question. An application to commit Mr. Harrison for contempt of Court was thereupon made to the Judge in Chambers. Mr. Harrison was represented by counsel, who, as far as I am aware, never objected to the hearing of the application in Chambers, which was in accordance with the law and the usual practice. Upon that occasion Mr. Harrison admitted his offence, and tendered a humble apology, upon which the learned Judge made an order that no attachment should issue against him provided he paid the costs of the application as between solicitor and client. Mr. Harrison, however, failed to pay such costs, and was committed to prison accordingly.

"TIED HOUSES."

Mr. SUMMERS: I beg to ask the Attorney General whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the number of "tied houses" in this country is constantly increasing; whether he is aware that the leases of such "tied houses" contain a clause providing that the lessee shall

> "have and purchase of and from the lessor and of and from no other person or persons, all the beer, ale, table beer, and cider;"

and whether there is anything illegal in such a clause, as being in restraint of trade; and, if not, whether there is an implied contract that the "beer, ale, table beer," &c., shall be of good quality, and shall be supplied at a reasonable price ?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. Webster, Isle of Wight): I am not aware that the number of "tied houses" is increasing, as suggested in the question of the hon. Member. There is, in my opinion, nothing illegal in such a clause as that referred to in the second paragraph of the question. A condition that the beer and ale and table beer should be of good quality would, in the absence of express stipulation, be implied, but the price must depend upon the special bargain in each case.

"MITCHELL *V.* REGINA."

Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if it is true that in 1886-7 a large sum of money voted by Parliament under Vote 19, for pensions and compensations to retired officers, was returned to the Treasury, as an unexpended balance, by the War Office; and whether he is prepared, as an act of grace and under the special circumstances under which the trial of "Mitchell *v.* Regina" took place, to grant as an act of grace to the suppliant, in consideration of his services of over 31 years in the corps of Royal Engineers, and the services of his father, the late John Wray Mitchell, Royal Artillery, for a longer period, some grant of money, as an equivalent for loss sustained by early retirement from the

Army, in consequence of the operation of new and enforced rules of retirement which did not govern the Army when he entered it?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): The surplus of Vote 19 for 1886-7 was surrendered to the Exchequer according to law, and is no longer at the disposal of Her Majesty's Government. I am informed that it is not the intention of the War Office to ask for any further compensation for Colonel Mitchell.

MR. C. GRAHAM: May I ask whether, if the suppliant in "Mitchell *v.* Regina" is made to pay the taxed costs of the Crown on the action under petition of right, Messrs. Hare and Co., the agents to the Solicitor to the Treasury, would only get one-half the allowed fees, and the other half go into the Exchequer receipts of the Crown; and whether this arrangement is in contravention of paragraph 32 of the Solicitors Act, 1843,

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The suppliant has been relieved from paying the costs of the Crown in this case. The arrangement with Messrs. Hare is an old one, which has worked well, and the legal point raised by the hon. Member is not one with which I am competent to deal.

SIR LINTORN SIMMONDS' MISSION.

MR. SUMMERS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether His Holiness the Pope has declared—

> "That marriages celebrated in Malta by all those who profess the Catholic religion, whether both contracting parties be Catholics, or whether one of them be a Catholic and the other a non-Catholic, are not, and shall not be, valid if they are not celebrated according to the form established by the Council of Trent;"

whether, on 18th January, 1890, Sir Lintorn Simmonds informed Cardinal Rampolla that Her Britannic Majesty's Government would cause a Project of Law to be introduced in the Council of Government in Malta in accordance with this declaration; whether Sir Lintorn Simmonds acted within his instructions in making such an announcement; and whether a Project of Law answering to this description has been introduced, or is about to be introduced, in the Council of Government in Malta?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The answer to the first three questions of the hon. Member is in the affirmative; and, with regard to the last, I think I had better refer the hon. Member to a letter of the Prime Minister which appeared in the *Times* of the 4th inst.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the interest felt in the subject, and the importance of its proposals, he will undertake that an opportunity will be afforded for reasonable discussion of the Savings Banks Bill, and can now mention a date for its Second Reading; whether he will now fix a day for the Second Reading of the Employers' Liability Bill; and whether he will now inform the House when the Government propose to afford it definite and regular opportunities of considering Supply?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I must refer the hon. Member to the statement I made in reply to a question of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian on the 10th inst. Then I stated that the Government felt it their duty to proceed from day to day with the Local Taxation Bill, and would make no arrangements with regard to public business until the Committee stage of that Bill was completed.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): Perhaps, as the right hon. Gentleman has inserted a condition in his answer—that it was intended to proceed day by day with the Local Taxation Bill, unless he had occasion to interrupt the proceedings on account of some measure of a public character; he also stated on the same day that he would be able to announce the intentions of the Government with respect to such a measure—he will permit me to ask whether he is able to make a statement, which is of great importance, as to the course of public business. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will lose no time in letting the House know what are the means to be taken with regard to the Bills before the House.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The right hon. Gentleman is perfectly accurate in stating that it is the intention of the Government to proceed with the Local Taxation Bill, unless it is necessary to interpose a Motion with regard to public business. I am not in a position to give any notice of such a Motion. So soon as I am in a position to do so, I will avail myself of the first opportunity to make a statement, and I am sure I shall be favoured with the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman. Until then, I must defer my statement.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I hope, also, independently of the question of any special measure, the right hon. Gentleman will bear in mind the time of year at which we have now arrived, and feel that it is becoming requisite speedily to announce the intentions of the Government as to their policy. This week I think it was understood we were to know.

**Mr. W. H. SMITH*: The right hon. Gentleman is not so accurate as he usually is. I carefully guarded myself. I said that I hoped "in a few days" to be able to give the statement referred to by the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): When is it intended to proceed with the Savings Bank Bill?

**Mr. W. H. SMITH*: I think I have practically answered that. The Government intend to proceed with the Local Taxation Bill as far as they can. If the Bill referred to can be taken after 12, it would then be taken, but it cannot then be taken if it is desired to have a discussion upon it.

GOVERNMENT SUB-CONTRACTS.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what administrative action the Government have decided to take in view of the "Evidence and Report of the Lords Committee on Sweating" to put a stop, by more efficient inspection and more stringent forms of contract, against sub-contracting or otherwise, to the practice of sweating, so far, at any rate, as work done for Government Departments is concerned, as to one of which Departments the Director of Contracts has himself stated that—

> "The evidence given before your Lordships has tended to show that our contracts have been used for some years as a vehicle for sweating, and that the whole of the sweating business has been carried out almost under the protection of the War Office."

Mr. W. H. Smith

**Mr. W. H. SMITH*: The remark which the hon. Member quotes applied only to accoutrements, and with regard to these I must refer him to the answer he received to a similar question on the 25th of July last.

Mr. C. GRAHAM: Will the right hon. Gentleman state if any War Office contracts have been given to foreign firms, and if so how many?

**Mr. W. H. SMITH*: A Return giving the information the hon. Gentleman desires will be presented to the House.

THE BLIND AND DEAF.

Mr. WOODALL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government has considered the Report and recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Blind and Deaf; and whether it is proposed to legislate for Ireland as well as for Scotland and England; and, in such event, whether effect will be given to the suggestions of the Royal Commission in special reference to the needs and circumstances of Ireland?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Government have before them the Report and recommendations of the Royal Commission referred to. They hope to propose legislation for Ireland on the subject so soon as the state of Public Business admits. In framing their proposals careful attention will be given to the suggestions of the Royal Commission.

WANTON DESTRUCTION OF SEA BIRDS.

Mr. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to illustrated letters in the *Daily Graphic* of 31st May and 3rd June, containing an account of the wanton destruction of sea birds and their eggs by a landing party from H.M.S. *Sir Richard Fletcher*, on the Island of Grassholme, in the Bristol Channel, on the 23rd May; whether the acts described in the letters constitute a breach of "The Wild Birds Protection Act, 1880;" and whether he will take steps to prevent the repetition of such acts by persons using Her Majesty's ships?

Mr. BRODRICK: This subject has already been brought by the hon. Member for Pembroke to the notice of the First Lord of the Admiralty, and, perhaps, the hon. Member for Swansea will allow me, by anticipation, to reply to his question in conjunction with that of my hon. Friend. Although the account given in the newspaper is somewhat exaggerated, it is the fact that an officer of the Royal Engineers did land on Grassholme, which is an isolated rock far out at sea, and did shoot some sea birds under the mistaken idea that the Wild Birds Preservation Act did not extend to the spot. The Commander-in-Chief has expressed his disapproval of the proceeding, and His Royal Highness has given orders that will prevent its repetition.

THE REV. J. POWER.

MR. P. J. POWER (Waterford, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland why is the Rev. John Power, Rathgormac, County Waterford, followed by a Government notetaker and by police when engaged in his duties, even when calling on the sick and dying in the ministration of his sacred duties; and can he state how long it is intended that Father Power shall be thus followed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that the rev. gentleman mentioned has been inciting to boycotting and intimidation in order to compel tenants to give up a surrendered farm which they had taken. In pursuance of this object he has been addressing indoor and open-air meetings, and whenever the police have reason to believe that he is about to hold an open-air meeting with this object he is followed by a police notetaker with the usual escort with a view to a prosecution being instituted against him. I am informed that the police do not follow him into any house, or in any way interfere with the ministration of his duties. So soon as the rev. gentleman discontinues the illegal practices mentioned, the duty of the police in the matter will at once cease.

MR. DILLON: If this priest is, as alleged, guilty of these illegal practices will he be prosecuted? If not, why not?

MR. P. J. POWER: Did the right hon. Gentleman obtain the information from the constables whose conduct we impugn? The answer of the right hon. Gentleman is directly opposed to what I state in the question.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I obtained the information in the only way in which the Irish Secretary can obtain it. If the hon. Gentleman has any further statements, and will be good enough to lay them before me, I shall be very glad to examine them. As to the question of the hon. Member for East Mayo, there are many cases in which the police are cognisant of illegal acts, and yet are unable to carry them to prosecution.

PROSECUTIONS AT CORK.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is true, as reported in the Cork papers, that summonses were last week issued at the prosecution of District Inspector Ball, Fermoy (County Cork), against Patrick Keefe, Thomas Kent, William Kent, George Mulcahy, John Fuohy, Patrick Walsh, John Donovan, and James Donovan; if he can state whether these prosecutions are brought with the approval or sanction of the Irish Law Officers; and whether he is aware that of the above-named defendants two of them, namely, Thomas and William Kent, are at present confined in Cork Gaol for offences arising out of the alleged boycotting of a farm in connection with which these summonses are now issued?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The prosecutions in this case are still pending, and therefore it would not be proper for me to make any statement on the subject. I shall be obliged if the hon. Gentleman will defer the question.

ALLEGED ILLEGAL USE OF FIREARMS.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that John Murphy, an emergency man, who was charged at Conna (County Cork) Petty Sessions last Friday, "with discharging a revolver on the public road" at a woman named Julia Fitzgerald and others, was acquitted by Colonel Longbourne, R.M., and two other Magistrates on the ground that "defendant had not got the revolver now;" also that the same defendant was charged by the Excise authorities with carrying the revolver without a licence, and fined the mitigated penalty of £2 10s. and costs; and whether he can state what are the reasons which induced Colonel Longbourne, R.M., to recommend that this fine be further reduced?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that the man mentioned was charged not with firing at any person, but with having discharged his revolver on the public road, the shot being fired in the air. The defendant was not acquitted on the ground alleged in the question, but because the Bench of Magistrates considered, from the evidence before them, that the defendant had reasonable grounds of alarm at the time he discharged the weapon in the air with the object of frightening without causing injury. The Bench recommended the remission of the Excise penalty on the ground that, in their opinion, the defendant was not responsible for the neglect to take out an Excise licence, the revolver having been supplied to him for his protection by his employer, by whom the licence should have, in their opinion, been taken out for him.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I will ask the right hon. Gentleman whether his attention has been directed to the fact that not a week elapses without some emergency man firing off his revolver; and whether anything will be done to put a stop to such riotous and rowdy conduct?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The fact has not been brought under my notice, nor am I aware that there has been any cases of serious breaches of the public peace.

Mr. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.): What about the case of Kinsella?

Mr. T. M. HEALY: And there was the Templemore case. In these cases two men were killed, and nobody was hanged for it.

*Mr. FLYNN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether instructions will be given that more supervision shall be exercised over the issue of licences to men of this character, in view of the frequent occurrences of outrages of the kind indicated?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I imagine there is supervision exercised. It is owing to the unfortunate state of Ireland that these men require revolvers.

*Mr. FLYNN: Will the right hon. Gentleman direct some inquiry to be made into the character of these men before the issuing of these licences?

Mr. T. M. HEALY: May I ask whether in this case the fine was remitted by the Lord Lieutenant?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no information on that point.

THE IRISH BANKRUPTCY DEPARTMENT.

Mr. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether, considering the effect of "The Local Bankruptcy (Ireland) Act, 1888, and the remarkable diminution latterly of commercial and legal business in Ireland, there is still sufficient employment for two Judges and 10 officers in the Court of Bankruptcy, Dublin; and whether the Government intend to take any steps with regard to this state of things?

PLOVERS AND CORN GROWING.

Mr. COX (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether it has come to his knowledge that farmers are giving up the growing of corn, because of the very serious damage done to the crops by the great increase of grubs and insects, consequent on the rapid diminution of plovers, by the systematic robbery of their eggs; and whether he will bring in a Bill declaring a close time for plovers' eggs?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. Chaplin, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Until the appearance of the hon. Member's question, I have never heard any suggestion made by agriculturists that corn growing has been discontinued owing to the scarcity of plovers. There are many districts to which I believe plovers never resort, where corn is grown extensively, and the corn crops in those districts do not appear to be more subject to the ravages of insects than the corn crops in other localities in which plovers are numerous. As to a close time for plovers' eggs, the only complaint which has ever reached me, and which I own rather commends itself to me, is that the season for plovers' eggs is too limited already, and it would be a hazardous experiment for any Minister, I think, to endeavour to further restrict it.

TORY ISLAND.

SIR EDWARD WATKIN (Hythe): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether all arrangements have now been made by Lloyds', with the sanction of the Board of Trade, for connecting Tory Island lighthouse and signal station by submarine cable with the main land of Ireland; and, if so, when this service of safety is likely to be put to work?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: As the application by Lloyds' to the Board of Trade for a Provisional Order under "Lloyds' Signal Stations Act, 1888," has been withdrawn, there is no need for the sanction of the Board of Trade to the establishment of a signal station on Tory Island. I have, however, communicated with Lloyds' on the subject, who inform me that, after considerable difficulty with the landowner, the conveyance of the requisite land has been completed, and possession will be immediately taken by Lloyds'. The contract for the manufacture and laying of the necessary telegraphic cable will, it is expected, be signed in the course of a few days, and also the contract for the erection of the necessary buildings, and it is believed that the signal station will be in working order within a few weeks, provided that the weather permits of the cable being laid within that time.

THE TIPPERARY AFFRAY.

MR. PARNELL (Cork): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will entertain the request for a Committee of Inquiry into the alleged excessive violence displayed by the Constabulary at Tipperary and Cashel, on the 25th and 27th of May?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The case appears to be strictly parallel to others that have, from time to time, occurred during the last 10 years. I do not see any reason for departing from the precedent set, no doubt after due consideration, by hon. Gentlemen opposite.

MR. PARNELL: Has the right hon. Gentleman's attention been called to the inquiry which has been held by the Town Commissioners of Cashel into this matter, and has he seen the Report, signed by 14 out of 18 members of that body, which relates to 17 specific acts of violence and improper conduct on the part of the police at Cashel?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir, I have not seen that Report.

MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the precedent afforded by the Belfast case in 1886 as one applicable to the present case?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course, I have the Belfast riots in my mind. There is, however, no parallel between those serious transactions and what occurred at Tipperary and Cashel the other day. We should require legislation to establish a tribunal like that which was created for Belfast.

MR. J. MORLEY: I agree that there were great excesses in the case of Belfast which do not exist in the present instance, but I wish to know, as a matter of principle, whether it is not in the interest of the police themselves, when the gravest charges are made against them, that an opportunity should be given for inquiry before some efficient tribunal?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There is a great deal to be said for the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman, but a Committee of the House of Commons, composed of Party gentlemen, is about the worst tribunal in the world to consider the case—an opinion which the right hon. Gentleman opposite seemed himself to hold when he decided on the Belfast case. The police have been chronically attacked during the past 10 years by hon. Members below the Gangway, and the charges now made with regard to Tipperary and Cashel are far milder than those made on previous occasions in which inquiry was refused.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I would remind the hon. Gentleman that in England charges against the police are invariably followed by judicial investigation, instituted and ordered by the Police Authorities themselves.

MR. DILLON: The object of the Irish Members is that some sort of inquiry should be had.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think that the suggestions of the right hon. Member for Derby can be carried out. The right hon. Gentleman desires that the police shall be prosecuted in order to find out whether they are guilty. That appears to me to be an inversion of the ordinary course of procedure. There ought to be a *primâ facie* case brought home to the mind of the Attorney General for Ireland before such an inquiry is instituted.

Mr. DILLON: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire into the charge that numerous people were injured by the police, and state what remedy they have?

Mr. T. M. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman refused an inquiry at Mitchelstown where someone was killed, and he refuses it now. How many people is it necessary to kill before an inquiry is granted?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

THE RESIGNATION OF MR. MONRO.

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I wish to ask whether there is any truth in the Report that Mr. Monro has resigned, and whether his resignation is owing to a difference of opinion between him and the Home Secretary; and, if so, upon what subject there has been a difference of opinion between them?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Matthews, Birmingham, E.): I regret to say that it is true that the Chief Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police has tendered his resignation, and that that resignation has been accepted. It is also true that differences of opinion have arisen between him and myself in respect to questions of administration and legislation affecting the Metropolitan Police.

Mr. STUART: Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us what those differences of opinion are?

Mr. MATTHEWS: I am not prepared at present to state what those differences of opinion are.

Mr. STUART: I will repeat my question to-morrow.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board what Amendments to the Licensing Clauses which are on the Paper the Government propose to accept?

*Mr. RITCHIE: I intend to accept the following Amendment, which stands on the Paper in the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby:—

Clause 6, page 4, line 25, after "agreement" insert "Provided always that nothing in this Act contained shall be construed as altering the existing law affecting the renewal of licences, or as giving to the holder of any licence any right or privilege other than that now enjoyed by him."

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Are the Government prepared to accept my attempt to deal with the question of licensing in Ireland separately from England, and thus save the time of the House? What objection is there to allowing a private Member to pass through a Bill on this subject? Will the Government consent to re-commit the Local Taxation Bill in order to insert an Irish clause?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: The Government do not see the necessity for doing this, and prefer to deal with the question as a whole.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Why do the Government persist in wasting Government time, which is extremely precious at this period of the Session, when the matter can be dealt with for Ireland in the time of private Members? Why need they do this if they do not object to the principles or proposals of my Bill?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: My view has always been that the Bill of the hon. Member is unnecessary, and it deals only with a part of the policy of the Government, or deals with it only in a fragmentary manner. I have no objection to the Bill making such progress that it might be passed if that of the Government does not pass into law.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER: When will the Select Committee on the Infant Life Protection Bill be moved for?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I am not in a position to answer until I have had an opportunity to make inquiry.

Mr. DILLON: I wish to ask for some definite information as to the time when the Irish Estimates will be taken?

(5.35.) Mr. SEXTON: I will ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Land Purchase Bill is to have precedence of the other Government measures?

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I must press the Leader of the House to say whether he really considers there is any prospect of the Irish Land Bill being passed this Session.

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: In reply to the question put by the hon. Member for East Mayo, I wish to say I am not in a position to give any pledge in regard to the matter referred to; but I will undertake that due notice shall be given. With regard to the Land Purchase (Ireland) Bill, that will be postponed *pro forma* till next Monday.

Mr. SEXTON : My question was put seriously. Do the Government intend to press on the Bill?

(5.34.) Mr. T. M. HEALY : I wish to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether it is now intended to follow the precedent set in 1886, when a great meeting of the Liberal Party was held at the Foreign Office, and on the same day the right hon. Gentleman himself moved the adjournment of the House for the purpose of extracting from the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian some account of what had passed at the Foreign Office. Does the right hon. Gentleman now intend to give the House a short account of what has passed at the meeting at the Carlton Club? At all events, we are entitled to press for an answer as to what is intended to be done with the Irish Land Purchase Bill.

*Sir M. HICKS BEACH : What I did in 1886 was to move the adjournment of the House, not for the purpose of extracting from the head of the Government what had passed at a private meeting, but for the purpose of ascertaining what action the Government would take with regard to a Bill which was at that moment actually under discussion in the House.

*(5.38.) Mr. W. H. SMITH : I thought I had made my statement sufficiently clear. I am not in a position to make any statement as to the course of public business at the present moment; but no inference of one kind or another ought to be drawn from that fact.

Mr. DILLON : Will the right hon. Gentleman inform us at least on what day we may expect a statement from him?

Mr. PARNELL : With reference to the promise of the right hon. Gentleman that he will give us notice when the Irish Estimates will be brought on, that promise was kindly meant, but it would rather indicate that the right hon. Gentleman did not intend to take them in their order. Lest he should be under the impression that that is what we desire, I wish to say that it is our desire that they should be taken this Session in their order, as they are reached, and should not be postponed as they have been on previous occasions, with the result that they have come on so late that discussion was impossible.

(5.45.) Mr. T. M. HEALY : I ask leave to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of calling attention to a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the conduct of Her Majesty's Government in the management of the business of the House, and in withholding from the House a statement of the intentions of the Government as to the course of business on the day on which it had been announced that a statement would be made on that subject.

*Mr. SPEAKER : I cannot put that Motion. I consider that the subject is not a "definite subject of urgent public importance;" and I shall decline to put the Motion at any risk to myself. I consider it is an abuse of the Rule of the House, a Rule which is not intended to be used for such a purpose as the Motion has in view. Notice has been given that an announcement will be made of the arrangements for public business, and to discuss the subject on a Motion for adjournment would be to anticipate the announcement of which notice has been given.

Mr. SEXTON : May I ask whether the leader of the House will undertake, either on Friday or on Monday, to state the intentions of the Government as to the Land Purchase Bill?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH : I will endeavour at the earliest possible moment to give to the House the information it is entitled to receive. I hope it may be possible on Monday, but I am not able to say now.

(5.50.) Sir W. HARCOURT : I understood you had stated, Sir, that the difficulty in the way of a Motion for adjournment, such as was made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite in 1886, was that notice had been given that an announcement would be made as to the course of public business. What we have endeavoured in vain to do is to extract from the Government information as to the time when the promised announcement is to be made. We understood the First Lord of the Treasury had promised to make it this week; and, if it is not made to-day, then it must be made to-morrow, if that promise is to be kept. If we are not to have the opportunity of bringing on a Motion to obtain information on this subject, we are, at least, entitled to a definite statement as to when the announcement will be made.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not aware that it is the custom of the House or of Parliament to require a Minister to state more than he is fairly in a position to state. I have stated to the House that it is my wish and my resolve to communicate to the House the proposals which we have to make with regard to the public business at the earliest moment. I said last Monday that I hoped to do so in the course of a few days. I think the right hon. Gentleman was not quite accurate in stating that I undertook to do so this week. I will endeavour to do so at the earliest possible moment. I cannot do so before next Monday; if it is possible I will do so then.

MOTION.

POLICE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Secretary Matthews, Bill to make provision respecting the Pensions, Allowances, and Gratuities, of Police Constables in England and Wales, and their Widows and Children, and to make other provisions respecting the Police of England and Wales, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Secretary Matthews, the First Lord of the Treasury, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Stuart Wortley.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 338.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LOCAL TAXATION (CUSTOMS AND EXCISE) DUTIES BILL.—(No. 244.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 17, to leave out Sub-section (ii.), in order to insert the words: "(ii.) The sum of three hundred and fifty thousand pounds shall be applied in England for the purpose of agricultural, commercial, and technical instruction, as defined in Section eight of 'The Technical Instruction Act, 1889,' and in Wales either for the said purpose or for the purposes defined in Section seventeen of 'The Welsh Intermediate Education Act, 1889.'"—(*Mr. Arthur Acland.*)

Sir W. Harcourt

Question again proposed,

"That the words '(ii.) The sum of three hundred and fifty thousand pounds shall be applied for such extinction of licences in England' stand part of the Clause."

(5.54.) SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): The principle involved in this sub-section is the most important principle in the Bill, and the one which hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House mean to fight most determinedly. We maintain that it is not the business of the Government to give special facilities for promoting the consumption of strong drink. I think I am quite in order in quoting on this matter a few words written by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board to the Rev. Peter Thompson, on the 14th of May, 1890, when he said—

"May I ask you also to believe that whether our proposals are good or bad they have been made solely with the view of showing our sympathy with the temperance movement and of taking some steps towards remedying the evils of which you speak."

The Government have said over and over again during the last few weeks that this Bill has been brought in on temperance principles, therefore we must discuss it on temperance grounds. Often and often, in addressing public meetings on the question of the drink traffic, have I quoted the language used by my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian, when he said in this House that drinking brought upon this country the accumulated evils of war, pestilence, and famine; and I think that if anything can justify such strong language it must be that which the right hon. Gentleman so strikingly described. Now, Sir, if I believed that the Bill brought in by the Government would diminish the amount of drink in this country no one would support it more strongly than myself. No one would more arduously support such a measure, whether brought in by a Tory Government or a Government composed of Members sitting on this side of the House, and I may add that I would gladly stump the country in favour of such a measure. After all, Sir, we do not discuss this question as a matter of pains and penalties; we discuss it because we regard the drinking system promoted by the existing licensing law as a serious national evil. We say it is not the business of the Government to give special facilities of consumption of strong drink. The late Sir Wm. Gull said that strong drink was the most destructive agent in this country, and we who object to the traffic in strong drink know that wherever that traffic is done away with you have all the benefits that could be wished by those who advocate sobriety and good order. In Liverpool, and in some other parts of the country, there are districts in which this drink traffic is not allowed, and I am informed that those districts are most popular as affording residences for the working classes. Wherever you do away with the drink shops you have peace and order and sobriety. I remember, however, that the gallant General who commanded the Red River Expedition, related an anecdote of a soldier who was asked whether he was not more healthy and happy without the drink. The man replied that he was a good deal more healthy, but he did not know that he was more happy. There can, however, be no doubt that if we would only get rid of this traffic in drink the general health and happiness of the people would be greatly promoted. Parliament has already admitted that we have a right to let the people decide whether they should allow this system to continue. I was reading the other day that there were certain districts in Africa in which no drink traffic was allowed, and they were called "uncontaminated zones." I think that that is a very good expression; and what we want in this country is that those who desire it should have uncontaminated zones. It will be remembered that, on the 27th April, 1883, the House, on the Motion of the hon. Member for Barrow, passed a Resolution declaring that the best interests of the nation urgently required some efficient legislation, by which, in accordance with a Resolution already passed and reaffirmed by the House, the legal power of restraining the issue and renewal of licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors shall be vested in those who are most deeply interested in that question. But although that Resolution was agreed to by this House nothing has been done in reference to it. We know that a certain place is said to be paved with good resolutions, but although, during the seven years that have elapsed since that resolution was passed, we have had both Liberal and Tory Governments in power, neither of them has done anything to give effect to that Resolution. When the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board brought in his Local Government Bill he told us the Government had resolved to deal with the licensing question. I well remember the speech he made on that occasion. He stated that there was a prevalent opinion in the country that some reform was necessary in reference to this question, and I am willing to admit that the right hon. Gentleman then had in view the desirability of carrying out the principle of the Resolution I have just referred to. He did not do it in the way I thought best, but in the most imperfect and unsatisfactory manner. Still, it was an admission that the people ought to be represented and to have the power over those licences. I would point out that if you pass this Bill as it stands, and give this money over to the County Councils, almost every election will turn on the question whether it is to be expended on the brewers or not, and you will have all the evils of that mixing up of Local Government with the drink question, which you wisely said was the great difficulty to contend with when you first approached the question. We had a Division on the question whether the Councils should have this power, and the right hon. Gentleman and the hon. Gentleman who had brought in the Bill voted themselves against it. The reason was, that they could not get compensation. That was the point. And here I may say that right hon. and hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side are more consistent in this matter than they have been in some others. Lord Salisbury, in his celebrated Newport speech, went at length into his views as to how this drink business should be dealt with. First of all, he laid down a general principle. He explained that unlimited facility for drinking beer was a doctrine which lay at the root of all liberty; and that if it were sacrificed, we should find very soon that other matters would be sacrificed also, and that those doctrines of civil and religious liberty for which our fathers fought so hard and did so much to establish, would be frittered away. No doubt the noble Lord meant that we should lose the opportunity of getting beer. As for civil and religious liberty, it was once said, "Oh, Liberty, what crimes have been committed in your name!" I think we might say in more colloquial fashion, "Oh, Liberty, what bosh has been talked in your name!" The noble Lord went on to say that the Local Authorities would be good authorities to manage the licensing question, because he believed the terror of having to provide fair compensation would furnish no inconsiderable motive to induce them to observe a wise and cautious moderation in the exercise of their important duties. What the noble Lord meant was that the Local Authorities should have nominal power to protect themselves; that they should be weighed down with impossible conditions, and prevented from exercising their powers by the fear that their constituents would be offended if they did what was right. On this principle, no doubt, the Bill of 1888 was framed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Ritchie). The right hon. Gentleman knows as well as I do how this Bill was condemned in the country. He remembers the meetings, and he remembers the resolutions and letters which Members, and I believe he himself, got, telling them the licensing clauses ought not be proceeded with. The consequence was those clauses were withdrawn. Well do I remember the afternoon when the right hon. Gentleman came down to withdraw them. I listened very attentively to him. I noticed that not a word of repentance fell from his lips. He did not say he disapproved of the principle he was abondoning. Since then I have often been blamed for what I have said about the Government, and my reply has always been—"The Government are still lying in wait like a band of robbers to tax the people and give the proceeds of the tax to the brewers." I do not say the publican, because he is pretty much a slave and a bondsman to the big brewer. It is the big brewer who is at the bottom of all this business, and whose interests the Government are looking after. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, when making his Budget Speech, announced to the astonished world the scheme now embodied in this Bill. "I will mention a process which will give much compensation and conciliation to the brewer." There was a question placed on the Paper to-day by my hon. Friend the Member for Huddersfield (Mr. Somers.) From that question it appears that there are in the town of Burnley 177 public houses, and that of these 165 are tied houses, leaving only 12 free houses in the whole of the town. This shows where the money is going. Do not let us hear any more about the poor publican with a wife and 13 children. It is the big brewer rolling in wealth whom the right Gentleman seeks to benefit by this Bill. A pamphlet was written four or five years called *Temperance Legislation and Licensing Reform.* The author was Mr. James, a member of the Executive Council of the Licensed Victuallers' Defence League, and he said that one of the most grinding, tyrannical, and demoralising systems that ever existed in this country was the bound house system. It is for the brewers, some with scores, and some of them with almost hundreds of houses, that the right hon. Gentleman comes down and asks the House of Commons to vote money. When the people of this country understand this Bill, I think they will be most extraordinary people if they submit to what is going on. The worst houses are to be bought out first—the unnecessary houses, as they are called. You are asking the public to give money for what is unnecessary. Could there be anything more shocking than that? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) was quite right when he called this a Publicans' Endowment Bill; but I think he would have been more correct if he had called it a Brewers' Endowment Bill. No wonder the brewers are alarmed. Small blame to them that they are. I went to a meeting last night, and there I found a brewer's agent, who had been sent down to fight against our resolution against the Bill. I will tell the Committee how the thing is being worked. I have here a circular which I obtained this very afternoon. It is marked "strictly private," and "not for publication." It is sent out by the Licensed Victuallers' Defence League of England and Wales, and in smaller letters it is stated that this League is "acting in concert with the Central Brewers' Protection Society." I will read a few choice bits. The circular stated

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that all public meetings might be attended by members of the public, and went on to say—

> "As soon as it is ascertained that a public meeting is to be called it is desirable that arrangements should be made, if necessary by a paid man, who can easily be obtained for a few pounds, and every licensed victualler in the district should be strongly urged to attend the meeting with his family and his friends, and any persons who can be spared from his establishment."

The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) is well aware that that means the "chuckers out." The publican and his wife and 13 children and barmaids and chuckers out are to go to these meetings and support resolutions which are to be sent to the right hon. Gentleman. How pleased the right hon. Gentleman will be when he gets them, and how he will rejoice in having the voice of the people on his side. We all know how the other night he got a telegram from Glasgow, and how he waived it aloft and said, "The people are with me." Twelve publicans in a bar parlour! It is very strange to see how misunderstood the Government is. Being great temperance reformers, they bring in a Bill solely in the interests of temperance. They stump the country with the object of promoting sobriety; they come down to the House every night and declare that their sole object is the promotion of temperance; and yet the only people they can get to support them are the brewers and their families and chuckers out. It is very curious, but I have no doubt they feel proud of their supporters. I remember that when Lord Folkestone stood for one of the divisions of Middlesex a large placard was issued in his favour. The words it contained were, "Vote for Folkestone and Religion." It happened that the placard was put up in front of a great public-house, and on a board upon which the ales sold in the house were advertised. The placard did not come down quite to the bottom of the board, and one line of the advertisement on the board was visible. The result was that the placard appeared to read, "Vote for Folkestone and Religion. Warranted pure by the Brewers." No doubt the brewers are very good men, but I do not see why they should be endowed with public money. Surely the taxes we raise from the poor people of this country—the taxes which are produced by the labour of this country—are intended for something else than to secure and consolidate what Mr. Justice Grantham called "the unholy profits of this trade." It is really a little too strong for the Government to tell us that they are doing this in the interests of temperance. They have no sense of humour. Do they believe that all these drink traffickers, these brewers, these chuckers out are really working in the interests of temperance? Do they think, also, that their fellow-countrymen, who for a generation past have been giving their lives to the promotion of temperance among the people, are all either knaves or fools, and that those who started as temperance reformers six weeks ago are the only persons who know how to promote temperance? Are the religious communities of the country to be ignored? Perhaps the Government holds with the *Times* on this question. The *Times* said about 10 days ago—

> "This question is eminently one to be determined by the judgment of Parliament, and not by the passionate declamation of religious bodies and temperance associations."

That is rather an extraordinary statement to be made towards the end of this nineteenth Christian century, in a country which spends millions of money in the endowment of religion, and to a House of Commons which very properly opens with prayer every day. Are people's opinions to be ignored because they are religious? That is the view of the *Times*, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will state whether it is his view also. I will go further, and ask, "Are the electors of this country to be altogether ignored?" The noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (Marquess of Hartington) made a speech yesterday at a meeting of the Women's Liberal Unionist Association, and he said—

> "Those who have succeeded in raising this agitation appear to me to have elicited a far stronger and more pronounced opinion on the part of a very large body of electors in the country than it has ever been in the power of the Home Rule Party to do."

The Home Rule Party may not be strong; but if we are stronger than the Unionists on this question it shows what a hold the question has taken upon the people of the country, and how dangerous it would be to ignore the feeling against this Bill. The secret of the whole thing is that the Government dare not throw the brewer over. They have thrown in their lot with the brewer. So be it. I shall say when the end comes, "Your blood be on your own heads." I will conclude my speech by reading a passage from a much better speech than I ever made—a capital speech, to which I would respectfully call the attention of the Committee, and to which I hope the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale will listen with great attention. It was a speech delivered in May, 1888, at a great meeting, over which I myself presided, so that I know the quotation to be accurate. The meeting was held to denounce the propositions of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) as regards compensation in the Local Government Bill of that year, and the speech was made by my hon. Friend the Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell). I would ask the Committee to remember that the proposition we have before us now is virtually and substantially the same as that made in 1888. My hon. Friend said—

> "I think that this is the most wicked proposal ever made by any Government."

Now, I want the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale to listen to this—

> "I want Lord Hartington to face this position, because he is the most potent factor we can have in all questions, and that is the reason I am making my appeal in all candour and honesty. I want him to understand that this means the placing on the ratepayers of England a burden equal to one-fourth of the National Debt. That is a terrific responsibility for the Party leaders to take upon their shoulders, and I shall be no party to it. I wash my hands"

—I have heard of somebody else washing his hands—

> "I wash my hands here to-night of the whole transactions, and when the measure comes on again after Whitsuntide there is one thing which must be understood plainly. This is not a question for the Closure—I am now speaking of another Party leader—this is not a question on which Mr. Smith is to sit 'on the fence.' This is one of the greatest issues of the century, and it will have to be deliberately, carefully, and thoughtfully fought, and any attempt in Parliament to stifle the fullest discussion on this momentous question cannot be tolerated. I have spoken as my heart has prompted me."

To-night, perhaps, he will speak as his head prompts him.

> "I shall do my best to convince individual members of the Unionist Party, and what I warn them of is this, that if these infamous clauses are allowed to pass they are simply, instead of settling this question, giving it a chance of being settled, starting an agitation which will convulse everything else, and will make it impossible for the people of England to attend to ordinary politics."

Mr. Courtney, I have kept the Committee too long. [*Cries of* "Go on."] No, I am not going on, because I cannot improve upon that speech. I trust that speech will be published and spread broadcast throughout the country. I trust it will be read by thousands, and that it will encourage many who are true opponents of the liquor traffic to fight with renewed vigour for the ultimate overthrow of the evil system which this Government are now endeavouring to introduce among us, and which, I believe, when the people of this country understand they will visit with a reprobation which has scarcely been equalled.

*(6.26.) THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am sure that whatever others may do I shall not blame the hon. Baronet for his intervention at this stage of the proceedings, or for the length of his speech. I acknowledge that this Amendment is directed at the very root of the proposal to which the hon. Member objects. I am perfectly prepared to accept the hon. Baronet's estimate of himself, and to recognise that he is an extremely good man.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: No, no; I said an old man.

*MR. RITCHIE: I think the hon. Baronet said that as people called him an extreme man he was not ashamed of accepting the term; that he thought it a very good thing to be extreme, and, for instance, he thought it a good thing to be an extremely good man. I am quite prepared to accept that, and to admit that the hon. Baronet has done much in the course of his life for the promotion of temperance. I am also prepared to admit that nothing which we are doing can at all compare with the efforts the hon. Baronet and his friends have made in the cause of temperance. But I rather take exception to the hon. Baronet's description of our proposal as the great plan of the Government for promoting temperance. We have never contended that this proposal could be considered in any proper sense as a proposal for the complete settlement of the question. What we have contended is that it is a step in the direction of temperance. Notwithstanding all the hon. Baronet has said as to the pressure from brewers and publicans, who, he asserts, are behind us, I maintain that the only object that the Government have in making these proposals is to take a step in the direction of temperance, and to endeavour, to some extent, to meet the demands which have been made by the Temperance Party for a reduction of the opportunities which are afforded to people of becoming intemperate. If it is any satisfaction to the hon. Baronet I can assure him that the great pressure he referred to as having come from the publicans and brewers has been utterly and completely non-existent. The Government never received from either the publican quarter or the brewing quarter the slightest hint that any proposal such as this brought forward by the Government was desired by their trade; and if the Government have gone wrong on this question, as no doubt the hon. Baronet thinks they have, they must take upon themselves the sole and complete responsibility for having done so, without pressure either from the publicans and brewers on the one hand, or the Temperance Party on the other. The attention of the Government had been forcibly drawn to the large increase in the consumption of drink, and we felt that it was legitimate to obtain some contribution from that source which would assist the constituted authorities in dealing, even in a small degree, with the great question which the hon. Baronet has so much at heart. The hon. Baronet charged the Government with promoting the sale and consumption of strong liquor. Surely that is an unjustifiable assertion.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: My impression is that my remarks referred to all Governments, and not only to the present Government.

*Mr. RITCHIE: The hon. Baronet, speaking of the introduction of these licensing clauses, said "It is not the duty of the Government to promote the sale and consumption of strong drink."

Sir W. LAWSON: I alluded to all Governments.

*Mr. RITCHIE: In connection with this proposal he evidently believes that to increase the duty on strong drink tends to promote its sale and consumption? We will go through one or two of the proposals in the Bill, and I ask, first of all, Does the hon. Baronet believe that an increased duty on strong drink tends to promote the sale and consumption of such commodity? One of the proposals of the Government is to increase the duty, and I understand that it is an axiom that an increase of duty does not promote but restricts the consumption, and that, in point of fact, when a Chancellor of the Exchequer has to consider the question of the increase of a duty, one of the most important considerations present to his mind is whether or not that increase will, by diminishing the consumption, defeat the end he has in view. So that I think the hon. Baronet will hardly be prepared to maintain his assertion that, so far as this proposal of the Bill of the Government is concerned, we are doing something to promote the sale and consumption of strong drink. I think he will, on the contrary, acknowledge that, so far as it goes, it is a restriction on the consumption.

Sir W. LAWSON: I said nothing about it.

*Mr. RITCHIE: Exactly, but I have reminded the Committee of what he did say. I say that one of our proposals is to increase the duty on drink, and that so far from promoting the sale of drink by that means we restrict it. Does the hon. Baronet contend that to prevent the increase in the number of houses for the sale of drink promotes the consumption of drink? If so, he differs very largely from the great body of temperance workers, who have always contended that drunkenness and the consumption of drink are increased by the number of opportunities given for it. When the Government say that there shall be no new licences except under rigorous restrictions, surely the hon. Baronet will acknowledge that the Government are taking a step in the direction of temperance, and not in that of promoting the consumption of drink. Then, again, whatever the merits or demerits of the Government proposal may be, licences are to be purchased for the purpose of extinguishing them, and the money used in the way in which the Government intend to appropriate it, will also diminish the number of opportunities for the sale and consumption of drink. So that there is not one of our proposals which is open to the accusations of the hon. Baronet; on the contrary, I maintain that they have the merit of being distinctly in the direction of decreasing the sale and consumption of drink. The hon. Baronet has said something about public opinion, and he ask me whether we are prepared to set at naught public opinion, temperance opinion, and religious opinion? For my own part, I am the last person to attempt to disregard an expression of public opinion. I consider that any one who has to take a part in the Government of a country is blind unless he endeavours to recognise what is the public opinion, and to take account of it. But it does not follow that a Government is always bound to act according to hastily expressed public opinion. Unquestionably no Government can shut their eyes to the current of public opinion; if they do so, they are guilty of folly. I hope that the hon. Baronet does not imagine because there has been a very considerable demonstration in Hyde Park—why, I myself demonstrated there—and because the whole of the very powerful organisation of the Temperance Association with which the hon. Baronet is connected has been put in motion, and many resolutions have been passed, that therefore the Government are bound to recognise that as the expression of the opinion of the majority of the public, especially having regard to the fact that there is abundant evidence to show that resolutions passed at many of these meetings entirely and absolutely misconceive not only the object but the actual proposals of the Government. I should like to know how many men, women, or children who have attended these meetings know anything about these proposals, or have ever seen them. I am certain of this, at least, that in a very large number of instances the proposals have been entirely misunderstood. There is one thing which the hon. Baronet and his friends have recognised in connection with this, and which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian has also recognised and acted upon, and that is this, that it is not advisable to enter into full details of all the proposals of the Government; that half the battle is won if you only give the proposals a bad name. And so

at various meetings our Bill has been called a Public House Endowment Bill. Any name more inappropriate could not be given to the proposals of the Government, but it is quite sufficient for those who attended the Hyde Park meeting, and spoke from platforms, to call this Bill a Public House Endowment Bill; they do not want to know anything more about it. The Government proposal cannot in justice be designated by that name. What is it the Government propose? Why, that out of money which would not be raised at all if not raised for this purpose—[Hon. MEMBERS: "Why not?"] Because we could not have made the proposal. I imagine right hon. Gentlemen will not assert that it is the duty of the Government to raise money which they do not require. [Sir W. HARCOURT: The Wheel and Van Tax.] What has the Wheel and Van Tax to do with it? The right hon. Gentleman must not throw a red herring across my path. Money is wanted for a specific purpose, and that money must be raised. I assert that this £400,000 or £500,000, or whatever the amount may be, would not have been raised except for this purpose. Whatever the right hon. Gentleman may think about it, we assert that our proposals are that out of money raised from drink by increased taxation, we empower bodies elected by the free votes of the people, whether as Town Councillors or County Councillors, to do that which they have been in the habit of doing out of the public rates for public improvements, that is to say, to buy up public houses. What public improvement could be, from the hon. Baronet's point of view, a greater improvement? This is called a Publicans' Endowment Bill. Surely, if it can be so called, the fund must be one out of which those who are to be endowed have a right to have payments made to them. ["Oh!"] Well, I do not know what endowment means if that is not so. There is not a single publican or brewer or distiller in this land who can compel the County Councils to spend one penny of this money upon any one of the houses in which he is interested. This money is placed in the hands of a popularly elected body, who may use it or not, exactly as they please. It has been again and again asserted that by this Bill we enable a publican to be paid for his house any sum he may demand. Anything more absurd than that could not be conceived. The publican has no claim at all. If he is paid any sum of money it will be only that sum which a popularly elected body chooses to give him. How can that be called endowment? I heard someone one say *sotto voce* "increase of value." [Mr. MUNDELLA: Hear, hear.] The Member for Sheffield says that. Let us examine that for a moment. Is the right hon. Gentleman prepared to have nothing to do with any proposal for closing public houses because it would increase the value of those which are retained? [Mr. MUNDELLA: No.] No? So far as regards the public houses that remain, it does not matter one jot by what process the increase of value is caused. It does not matter whether the increase of value is caused by the sweeping away of licences or by any other cause. Is the question of increase of value to be a bar to taking any step in the direction of diminishing the number of public houses? Now, I wish to say something upon the question of public opinion. The Government recognise the importance of gauging public opinion on a matter of this kind. The hon. Baronet spoke of religious communities and their opinion. Well, with the exception of some isolated branches, the position which the executive of the Church of England Temperance Society took up has been supported by an immense majority of the Society. Then, with regard to Dissenting communities, I am constantly receiving communications from distinguished members of those bodies showing that there is a very large body of opinion amongst them adverse to the position taken up by the hon. Baronet and his friends.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): Give us the names.

*MR. RITCHIE: I did not intend to do so; but I will trouble the Committee by giving names. Last night I received a letter from a gentleman, with whom I am not personally acquainted, but who has been very prominent in the promotion of a great many very good and philanthropic movements—Sir George Hayter Chubb. [*Opposition laughter.*] Well, I understand that Sir George Hayter Chubb is a very prominent member of the Dissenting community. He writes to me—

> "Dear Sir,—You may possibly have seen in the *Times* of the 2nd instant a short letter from me stating that a paragraph which appeared on May 30th was incorrect, and that the Wesleyan Methodist Committee of Privileges was not unanimous in its vote to oppose the Government Licensing Bill. It is right that you should know I have since found that other members of the Committee who were not present when the vote was taken are in favour of the Government proposal. I have also received letters from Wesleyan Methodists holding the same view as myself, and in particular one from Mr. B. W. Fayle, of Syngefield, Parsonstown, Ireland, from which the following is an extract, which, with Mr. Fayle's consent, may be made public, should you so desire: 'I am a Methodist of the third generation, and a local preacher of 50 years standing. I am also a County Magistrate, and a Licensing Justice, and I have to deal with that question very extensively; at least 100 cases come under my review in the year. I have to adjudicate very often in matters of the violation of the Licensing Laws, and I fearlessly assert that a more equitable or far-reaching piece of legislation was never proposed; and if the Government are inclined to withdraw the measure, it will be the greatest blow the temperance cause ever got, and it will heap the greatest condemnation on those people who oppose the measure; and if it is withdrawn, I feel assured that men will have hoary heads before such another measure will be introduced. It is an entire mis-apprehension to suppose a Justice has the power of withholding the renewal of a licence except on statutory grounds. The present Bill gives the Local Authority power to close a public house by giving the publican compensation, not 1d. of which comes out of the pocket of the taxpayer outside the trade, the 6d. per gallon on whisky, and 3d. per barrel on beer furnishes the fund, and thus the trade itself bears the burden. The abolishing of the issue of new licences will at once act. If this measure becomes law I shall set myself to the task of withdrawing licences in objectionable places in this neighbourhood.' Assuring you that I shall be happy to be of any further service in the matter,
>
> I am,
>
> Yours very faithfully,
>
> GEORGE HAYTER CHUBB."

[*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Sir George Hayter Chubb is a very distinguished member of the Wesleyan Methodist Body, and although he may be wrong, as hon. Gentlemen think the Government are wrong, on this question, his opinion is at least worth quoting. [Mr. CONYBEARE: Only one man.] But what I am pointing out is that the meeting at which this resolution against the Government proposals was passed was by no means unanimous.

MR. STOREY (Sunderland): He doe not say that any beside himself objected

*MR. RITCHIE: He says—

> "It is right that you should know I have since found that other members of that Committee who were not present when the vote was taken are in favour of the Government proposal."

What I said was that he not only expressed his own opinion, but asserted he expressed the opinion of other members of the Governing Body. I have several others here. [*Cries of* "Read."] I do not feel myself justified in taking up the time of the Committee. I hope they will take my word that I have several other letters. Well, so far as public opinion is concerned, public opinion is not always expressed in one way on this matter. Often meetings called for the purpose of condemning the Government have ended in blessing them. ["Name."] A meeting of the members of the Cardiff Town Council was called for the purpose of expressing their opinion upon the licensing proposals of the Government, and by a majority of 18 to nine they expressed their approval of the proposals. There was an open-air meeting in Barnsley, in which the proposals of the Government were enthusiastically supported, and I have had sent me the *Derby Telegraph*. Does the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby recognise the name? [Sir W. HARCOURT: Yes.] He will admit, I suppose, that that paper supports the Party to which he belongs. On the 16th of May the *Derby Telegraph* published an article on this subject in which they said—

> "And with regard to Mr. Ritchie's proposals we feel ourselves constrained to admit that they meet a difficult subject in a broad and common-sense method. We believe we are far more sincere in our desire to see the Government turned out than Mr. Caine is, but we do not expect to hear them ordered to quit over their compensation scheme. To be perfectly candid, we have no desire to see their expulsion in connection with a legislative scheme, which, all things considered, we believe to be equitable. May we go further and humbly express the opinion that Mr. Caine will find a very great section of the Liberal Party holding the same opinion."

There, I am glad I have at last arrived at an authority the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby will recognise. I have also the report of a meeting at Gateshead, called and presided over by the Mayor for the purpose of denouncing the Government proposals, and the Mayor, on a show of hands, was constrained to admit that opinion was equally divided. There was a temperance meeting at Birkenhead for the same purpose, at which an amendment was carried by a majority. At Liverpool the Government licensing scheme was endorsed at a large temperance meeting. At many other places temperance meetings called to denounce the Government measure have carried resolutions by large majorities supporting the proposals of the Bill. This shows at least that public opinion is not all one way. [An hon. MEMBER: How many cases?] I have given several instances as illustrations. I think I need not go back upon the list.

MR. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness): Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether he knows of a dozen cases?

*MR. RITCHIE: These things are not all brought before me, though certainly I have a very much larger number of them than I have brought with me. I have only taken the most striking illustrations. The hon. Baronet (Sir W. Lawson) said a good deal about our proposals in the Local Government Bill of 1888, and he referred to a speech of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) upon that Bill, contrasting that with the views now expressed by the hon. Member. I should have imagined this is an argument in favour of the present proposals. It is only fair to argue that if the hon. Member saw in our proposals now the principle he denounced in 1888, he would have acted in the same way now as then. But, far from that, the hon. Member for South Tyrone, who has been a great worker in the cause of temperance, has expressed his approval of those proposals, believing that they are a distinct and memorable step in the direction in which he desires to go forward. I can, of course, understand opposition to the Bill coming from quarters which will only be satisfied by the complete sweeping away of all public houses as a remedy for the evils we all recognise. The more I see of the arguments of the hon. Baronet and his supporters the more do I see that the real issue between us and those quarters is whether public houses are to be reduced in number until they merely supply the wants of the localities, or whether the present condition of things shall remain until proposals are made by which public houses shall be swept away altogether. If the hon. Baronet imagines that the time is likely to arrive within a period which any of us are likely to see when public houses shall be altogether swept away, in my opinion he is entirely and absolutely mistaken. I do not believe that, however much we may give the control of these matters to the Local Authorities, the time will ever arrive when those bodies will be able to face the storm that would arise in case they attempted to deal with this subject in the drastic manner advocated by the hon. Baronet. The question that the Government put to themselves was whether they should sit still and do nothing to mitigate the evils which they, equally with hon. Members opposite, recognise until the time arrives when the matter can be dealt with in the way the hon. Baronet desires. The Government have come to the conclusion that it is their duty, instead of taking that course, to endeavour by some moderate proposal such as we have made to deal with this great question of the licensing of public houses, though even slightly. We do not profess that our proposal is a large one, but we deny that it will in any way interfere with that which the hon. Baronet desires to promote. We are prepared to safeguard our proposal in every possible way, and to accept the Amendment which stands upon the Paper in the name of the right hon. Member for Great Grimsby, which, if inserted in the Bill, ought to dispel all fears entertained by the hon. Baronet and his friends—I say it ought to, I do not say it will—all fears as to the way in which this Bill may hamper Parliament in dealing with this question when it comes to be dealt with in a larger and fuller manner. We insert in the Bill provisions which will prevent public houses now existing from being considered to be of increased value, for the purposes of any future legislation, owing to the operation of this measure; and, speaking honestly and sincerely, I cannot conceive on what grounds and with what object the so-called Temperance Party are opposing the Government in so bitter and hostile a manner. I deeply regret that the Government should be at issue with the very people whom we desired to conciliate. I do not expect hon. Members on the Front Bench below the Gangway to accept my statement; but I hope that those who know me will believe me when I say that it is a matter of bitter regret to the Government to find themselves in opposition to those whom they sought to conciliate by this proposal. The hon. Baronet has asked why in this case the Government do not abandon their proposal. We do not intend to abandon it. We believe that the operation of this Bill will be entirely in the direction of that which the friends of temperance have at heart, and that, when the time comes for doing that which I have always been in favour of, namely, transferring, under proper conditions, the licensing power to popularly-elected bodies—it will be found that the present proposal of the Government will have operated in the direction of temperance.

*(7.10.) MR. CAMERON CORBETT (Glasgow, Tradeston): The right hon. Gentleman has expressed regret at finding himself in opposition to those whom he sought to conciliate, and I can assure him that a great number of those who are opposed to the Government proposals oppose a Unionist Government with the greatest reluctance. Many of us have felt so strongly in favour of the Unionist cause that we have been willing to see a large number of Temperance measures we have had strongly at heart postponed, and we have been the more ready to acquiesce in this believing in the steady growth of temperance sentiments outside the House, and that delay only strengthened the temperance position. There is not one of those who belong to that section of the party who would not gladly have accepted this measure if they had felt that it was the smallest advance in the right direction. We, however, could not disguise from ourselves that its provisions will build up a wall in front of temperance progress. This Bill has met with the unanimous support of the liquor interest. That it has the all but unanimous condemnation of the Temperance Party throughout the country has been only emphasised and made more clear by the way in which the right hon. Gentleman has sought to bring before the House solitary individual

instances in connection with the Temperance Party where support has been given to the Bill. The one individual who, on the executive of the Wesleyan Church, supported the Bill has been specially mentioned in a letter in the *Times*, and has been brought before the House to-night. As to the amount that is set aside to buy up licences, analysis will show that with that sum it will take half a century to buy up 1-10th of the public houses. This ground of complaint is not lessened by the answer given by the right hon. Gentleman to the deputation from the Church of England Temperance Society. The President of the Local Government Board remarked that there were licences that would be of little or no value if the houses were properly conducted. It follows that public money is to be used to buy up houses because they have been badly conducted. We are told the Bill will not strengthen the case for compensation: but could a County Council buy out the worst licences because they were nuisances, and afterwards as the Licensing Authority and acting on public grounds refuse the renewal of a licence to a well-conducted house because it was not required in the public interests? Would it not appear a flagrant injustice that a badly-conducted house should be treated on more liberal terms than a well-conducted house? In fact, the putting of a premium on bad houses would tempt publicans to compete in the misconduct of their houses for the sake of being bought out on their own terms. I have heard it denied that the publican will be bought out on his own terms, but I think there is a great deal of truth in the statement that if a County Council finds that a public house is a nuisance and should be done away with, in all probability the publican is not anxious to leave, and the inducement to him to do so must be on the most liberal terms. We are apt to be misled when we are told that public houses have been acquired by Local Authorities, and that that forms in any degree such a precedent for compensation as we would have furnished in this Bill. Up to this time no publican has received payment, simply because it was held that there were too many public houses in the neighbourhood. Licences have been granted on the theory that public houses were required to meet the wants of the community, and now, for the first time, it is said that public money is to be spent in buying them up simply because the number of public houses is in excess of the public demand. I do hope the Government will even yet take warning. I hope the bye-elections which have taken place in the country when the question of compensation has been before constituencies will not be without effect. Remember Ayr and Southampton. The Ayr election turned entirely upon the compensation question, and the estrangement of the Temperance Party lost the representation of Ayr for the Unionist cause. I do trust the Government will take warning from recent elections and not follow a course which will seriously endanger the Unionist cause we have at heart by pressing these clauses, but will still enable those temperance Unionists who are prepared to postpone the temperance cause to the claims of unionism to co-operate with them in the main object for which the Government was elected.

(7.22.) MR. ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I regret very much the attitude temperance advocates have taken up. I have called a meeting of my constituents in Stepney, and I took a sort of *plébiscite*, the result of which is that I do not hesitate to say this Bill is there regarded as being, in every sense, a temperance measure. To-day I have received a letter from a lady, the honorary secretary of a temperance society, who, after complimenting me for sending her a subscription, protests against the ignoring of the fair claims of publicans to a reasonable amount for goodwill, but thinks that the utmost that should be conceded is a fixed tenure for five years, and that it is wrong that they should have a permanent interest in a national disgrace. She has no pity for rich brewers and distillers, but does not wish to hurt the publican as a trader. By shutting the door against this Bill, the Temperance Party will throw back their cause for 20 years. I was present at a meeting in the East of London which was largely attended by publicans, and I did not find that they had any desire to claim compensation on the scale represented by the opponents of this Bill. The hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth takes the part of the publicans against the brewers, and there is possibly good reason for it. No doubt the publican has been for many years a butt in every sense of the word. I know a recent case in which a man invested his savings of £500 in a house, the goodwill of which was valued at £2,000; the brewer, who was to supply the beer, advanced £1,200, and a distiller £300; and under this scheme the brewer and distiller will take the compensation and the publican will never recover his £500. This is the weak part of the Bill. The clauses will have to be amended so as to protect the publican as against the brewer and the distiller. The Government need not care about brewers who have turned their business into a limited liability company; their concern ought to be for the common domestic shareholder. It is the publican who ought to be considered, and under the Bill he is not considered. Well, now, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Barrow, in the speech which he made on the introduction of the Bill, mentioned the prices of public houses in his own neighbourhood. He put the value at a sum of £5,000 or £6,000 apiece. *Now, I have taken a great deal of trouble to ascertain at what cost a number of these public houses could be bought up, and I will venture to assert that I could clear away 100 public houses in the East End of London at a cost of £250 each. In that part of London where the population is greater than in any part of the Metropolis the public houses are very close together. I should be glad to subscribe a sum of money sufficient to clear away one house, in order to show my sincerity in the cause of temperance. If this Bill enables us to clear away these houses at so small a price, surely it is a Temperance Bill. I attended a meeting in the East End of London the other day, and there I was told by men who looked at this matter from a business point of view that the public houses were much too close together, and that many publicans would be only too glad not merely to be bought out, but to get back the money they had invested in the public houses, so that they might go into some other business. I attended, too, the meeting in Hyde Park, and listened to all the speeches that I possibly could. I found that exactly the same argument was used at each platform. The publicans were denounced for doing the mischief, but now we are told that it is the brewers and the distillers. I think that the vigorous and spirited speech of my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board will clear many hazy ideas from the minds of hon. Gentlemen who object to the Bill solely from a party point of view. I only wish that hon. Gentlemen would ascertain the feeling of their constituents on this point. If the Bill gave the publicans a vested interest and undue advantages I should oppose it without the slightest hesitation. But I believe that it will do a vast amount of good in the country, and that it will give great assistance to the temperance cause, and, therefore, I trust that hon. Members will be found voting in the right Lobby when we go to a Division.

*(7.35.) MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): The hon. Gentleman will have an opportunity of voting according to the views he has just expressed. There are Amendments on the Paper which limit the compensation to the actual holder of the licence, and I suppose that the hon. Member who has just spoken will vote for those Amendments. I should like to hear more speeches of the same sort from these Benches. It would have been better for the Government to have done nothing than to have brought in proposals which will throw back the temperance cause for half a century. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board stated that in view of the enormous increase in the drink bill of the nation the Government felt that they could not sit still with folded hands and wait for the introduction of a larger measure, but they had better have done that than bring in this Bill, and we cannot forget that similar proposals were made before the Drink Bill was known. The right hon. Gentleman said that no pressure had been brought to bear upon the Government by the drink trade.

*MR. RITCHIE: I was speaking of the initiation of the measure.

*MR. WINTERBOTHAM: I quite accept the statement of the right hon.

Gentleman that the initiation of this measure was due to honest enough motives. But I do suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that he cannot disguise from himself any longer the fact that the people in whose interests this measure was brought forward, as he says—the Temperance Party—have universally reprobated it. In fact, they detest it—and although one Wesleyan Methodist has been found who approves of it—Wesleyan Methodists are occasionally crotchety—it will be found that temperance reformers generally are opposed to it. The right hon. Gentleman cannot blind himself to the fact that the great body of temperance reformers throughout the country are against it, and that, on the other hand, the proposals of the Government meet with the warmest support and appreciation of those people who have always been opposed to temperance reform. In whose interests is this legislation proposed? It seems to me there are six distinct interests, all separate and, more or less, conflicting. The first is that of the licencee; the second, that of the consuming public; the third, that of the general public who are not customers; the fourth, that of the taxpayers; the fifth, that of the owners of the property behind the licencee; and the sixth, that of the manufacturers of alcoholic beverages. Now, I believe firmly that as regards five out of six of these classes their interests will not be served, but will be prejudiced by this Bill; and I hope that I shall be able to show that in the course of the few remarks I am about to make. Let us take first the case of the licence holder. How do the proposals affect him, and what is his case? I speak now for the country only, and not for the towns. Possibly in the big cities of the Empire different conditions may prevail, but I have been a licensing magistrate for nearly twenty-five years, and I think I can speak with some authority as to the public houses in the country. So far as the *bonâ fide* hotel-keeper or grocer are concerned, I believe it is absurd to apply the same law to such as to a shop where merely drink is sold. I think the law should be quite distinct for such different cases. Twenty-five years ago the publican was a free man doing a free trade, and I appeal to hon. Members who are Licensing Magistrates whether I am not right in saying that the very reverse is now the case. In those days there was a fair and honest competition. It was a free publican's interest to supply the best class of articles at the cheapest possible rate, but now a change has come over the trade, and during the last 25 years—and certainly in a marked degree within the last 12 to 15 years—the great majority of the houses in the country districts with which I am acquainted have been bought over the heads of the free publicans and converted into tied houses. In the County of Gloucester there are four companies which possess no fewer than 664 tied houses. In one village there are seven houses, all belonging to one company. In another village there are five tied houses belonging to different companies; as a rule, the publican is a mere servant of the owner of the house. In some cases he is even paid wages; more frequently he is paid according to the profits made and the amount he sells. And hon. Members must know how frequently it happens that when a publican is brought before a Bench for some breach of the Licensing Laws, the solicitor who appears to defend him throws him over immediately a suggestion is made that the licence may be endorsed, and promises at once "that a new and respectable tenant shall be obtained." As a matter of fact, these publicans are in some cases as described in Mr. James' pamphlet, in a state of servitude. Now, I have always contended that the publican is entitled to fair consideration. I have always said that I would give every man who is the holder of a licence, subject to good behaviour, a 10 years' life interest. If that were done, there would be no question of turning a man, his wife, and 13 children suddenly into the streets to starve, because he would be allowed 10 years in which to find out another trade, by means of which he could earn a livelihood. I repeat, I would give every publican, subject to good behaviour, and subject to his life, a 10 years' licence, and by the operation of such a scheme we should year by year reduce the number of licensed houses in the country without a single sixpence expense to the National Exchequer. There was a case which came before the Liverpool Chancery Court the other day. It was the case of "Caine *v.* Hands," and it transpired that the defendant had refused certain beer from the plaintiff on the ground that it was not good. Chancellor Bristowe, however, held that Caine, the brewer, was entitled to enforce his covenant on all points, notwithstanding the complaint as to the quality of the beer. And let it be remembered that these tied houses do not merely confine the tenant to purchasing the beer of one firm alone. The system provides that he shall purchase his wines, spirits, and sometimes even his aërated waters, and, in fact, he is given no liberty at all. Now, the second man whose interest is to be considered is the customer. I have already instanced the case of a village in which there are seven licensed houses. These seven shops are doing what three shops could do equally well, and it is the customer who has to pay the expense involved by the greater number of establishments. Let us take a case of the village in which there are five houses—they are rated at £49 2s. 6d. in the aggregate. They were worth two or three hundred pounds a piece—at the outside £1,500—but, owing to the competition of the brewers, they have been sold for £4,000. Who has to pay the interests? It is, I venture to say, the unhapy customer. You create a monopoly, you have only one tap, and the interests of the customer are in no way consulted. Thirdly, I come to the case of the general public outside. What, I would ask, is the proportion of the population which uses public houses. I am speaking, of course, for the country, and, providing that one in every seven is the head of a family, by the time you have deducted nine-tenths of the women and children, all the temperance fold, all the upper class, all the professional class, 75 per cent. of the tradesmen, a proportion of the more highly-cultured of the working classes, one is driven to the conclusion that not more than one-fifth of the population, say 400 in a village of 2,000 inhabitants, enter the public house at all. Then how about the interests of the other four-fifths? I am no fanatic teetotaller. I would give people reasonable facilities to do what they think right, so long as they do not infringe the liberties of others; but I do suggest that we ought to allow these four-fifths to have some voice, and we ought not to force on them these public houses when they do not want them. If they believe honestly that this trade is the cause of crime, poverty, and misery, which exists in their midst, we ought not to prevent them putting a stop to the cause which produces such effects. Why should not they be able to do as they wish in this matter? Next we come to the position of the taxpayer. This is not a question of £300,000 or £400,000; it involves more likely a sum of £250,000,000. We have had some fallacious arguments put before us in this connection. The Under Secretary for the Treasury, in a speech at Marlborough the other day, said that the money was to be provided by the trade themselves, whereas he knows every penny will come out of the pocket of the consumer; while the Attorney General, in a speech at Ventnor on the 22nd May, said—

> "He had received numerous letters from Conservatives and others, begging and imploring him to use his influence towards the withdrawal of the proposals. He had read them carefully and replied to each one carefully . . . . If the Government proposals involved payments from current rates, the action of temperance people would be justified. Thus taking his stand entirely on the ground that the money to be used for compensation was not public property!"

What I would point out is that the extinction of a few licences would necessarily enhance the value of the remainder. And now I come to the case of the property owners. We will say there are 20 houses, each of the value of £200, but suddenly one is given a licence, and the value of that one house goes up 300 per cent. to £600, while the value of the remaining 19 is reduced 15 per cent. to £170. The £600 house holds a monopoly, and makes a lot of money, but you do not attempt to compensate the owners of the 19 houses. If the monopoly is removed the £600 house will again become of the value of only £200, but the other 19 houses will recover their position and become each of the value of £200, so that the aggregate value is unchanged, and I should like to know why the tax-payer should compensate the owner of the one house. The unfortunate tax-payer has to play the game of "Heads I win; tails you lose"—he is to compensate losses and not to participate in profits. I maintain that the property owner is the only man who will benefit under this Bill. I maintain that this House has a perfect right, under the existing law, to deal as it thinks best with the liquor traffic. Though we have given a monopoly, we have, I maintain, been always extremely careful to guard that monopoly by making the licence yearly. I maintain that these proposals are an insidious way of counteracting recent decisions of the Law Courts by raising such a barrier as will effectually prevent public houses being decreased by magisterial action. It is perfectly impossible to conceive that any Bench of Magistrates would be so unjust, or unfair, as to take away a man's licence merely upon the ground that there were too many, while the County Council were giving money payments out of a public fund with the identical object. The Home Secretary said it would be an argument for the Bench to shut up a public house without compensation if the owner had refused fair terms offered by the County Council. I never heard of anything more unfair than that. English Magistrates are too honourable to act in such a way. I denounce these proposals as being in the interests of a gigantic monopoly. I appeal to good men on both sides of the House not to allow this to be a Party question. I appeal to my own leaders to make a bridge for the Government to retire easily from proposals which are against the religion, morality, and good feeling of the whole country. I appeal to my leaders to make it easy for them to withdraw. This is too serious a matter to be risked by mere Party considerations. I believe the proposals are fraught with the greatest danger to the highest and best interests of the country, and I believe it will be found that as they are realised and become known they will be opposed by all sober men.

(8.5.) MR. LLEWELLYN (Somerset, N.): There is a great deal of what has been said by the hon. Member in which I cordially concur, especially as regards "tied houses." For my own part, I far prefer the innkeeper who owns his house to the tenants of large companies. The houses of the former are generally far better conducted than those of the latter. In cases where a man has been obliged to increase the value of his premises, in order to retain his licence—I mean where outhouses and buildings have fallen into disrepair, and the man is obliged to put his hand in his pocket—surely such a man is entitled to some consideration. I hope the Committee will not be misled by what has been said with regard to the excessive value paid for some houses by large companies. I know of one case where a property realised double the reserve price put upon it. Such prices are ridiculous, and it would be absurd to think that the County Council would take them into consideration, or be misled by them. I think that where a man has been called upon to improve his property at his own expense the House will agree with me that he is entitled to compensation.

*(8.10.) MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): The disclaimer of the Government of any association with the licensed victuallers shows that they are ashamed of their clients in this matter.

*MR. RITCHIE: Why?

*MR. BRYN ROBERTS: You disclaimed any connection with the licensed victuallers. Why?

*MR. RITCHIE: What I stated was in answer to the hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth, who said that the reason we had brought this measure forward was because of the pressure which the licensed victuallers had brought to bear. I explained that there had been no pressure whatever from either publicans or brewers in connection with the proposals.

*MR. BRYN ROBERTS: The right hon. Gentleman unfortunately stated the reason why they brought forward this proposal. It was because of the increased consumption of drink. What surprises me is, if there was no pressure from the trade, how it was that proposals analogous to them were made two years ago when there was no increase but an actual diminution in the consumption of drink.

*MR. RITCHIE: The reason we made the proposals two years ago was that we were then instituting a great scheme of Local Government. We were transferring the municipal duties of the Justices to an Elective Body, and I considered that we should not be presenting a complete scheme to the House if we did not transfer the granting of licences from the Justices to the Elective Bodies.

*MR. BRYN ROBERTS: If the right hon. Gentleman had simply proposed the transfer of the administration from the Magistrates to the County Council no opposition would have been raised on this side of the House; but he superadded the restriction that the County Council could not exercise the power of stopping a licence without compensating the publican, thus imposing an obligation which the Magistrates do not lie under. What was the impelling motive of the Government in imposing that restriction?

*MR. RITCHIE: Justice.

*MR. BRYN ROBERTS: Oh, justice! The House will appreciate the right hon. Gentleman's position, and I will not press the point further. The right hon. Gentleman proceeded to deny that there was a strong expression of public opinion against the Bill. He has been pressed to specify the instances in which public meetings have declared in favour of the proposals of the Government, and he mentioned four, together with the Cardiff Town Council. The right hon. Gentleman, however, refrained from stating the number of resolutions which have been received from public meetings opposed to the Government proposals. The right hon. Gentleman complains that these meetings did not understand what they were discussing, because they constantly referred to the Bill as one for the endowment of public houses. He says that there is no endowment of the licence under this Bill; because the licencee cannot compel the County Council to purchase. But the licencee can decline to allow the County Council to stop a single licence except on the terms he himself chooses. If he chooses to put a ridiculous price on his licence, then the County Council either must pay that ridiculous price or things must remain as they are.

*MR. RITCHIE: Only his own licence.

*MR. BRYN ROBERTS: Is it to be supposed that a man will not put a ridiculous price on his licence. As every man always does, he will put the most liberal estimate upon his own property. There is another point. Take, as an illustration, the case of the village referred to by my hon. Friend (Mr. Winterbotham), where there are six public houses. It does not matter, for the purpose of my argument, whether they all belong to one owner or not. The County Council buys one of the licences at £500, and the value of the remaining five licences is immediately increased, and the County Council would have to pay that increased value, or the licencee would refuse to sell.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. LONG, Wilts, Devizes): The hon. Member has not noticed that in Clause 9 it is proposed that no licence which it is desired to purchase should acquire any additional value by virtue of the Bill.

*MR. BRYN ROBERTS: I think the hon. Gentleman must have misread his own Bill, because on the Second Reading of the Bill the President of the Local Government Board himself stated that the clause in question has reference only to subsequent legislation, and not to the tying down of the purchase money under this Bill. But even supposing the clause is extended by Amendment in Committee, so as to prohibit the County Council from paying for a house any increased value which accrues to it from the purchase of rival houses, the owner in that case would refuse to sell unless he got his price. He would prefer to keep his licence and reap the additional value himself. Therefore the Bill will be entirely unworkable. Surely, if one of the six licences is purchased for £500, the remaining five will be worth £600 each. I do not say that the increase in value would be the exact arithmetical proportion in the case of houses wide apart; in such a case it is to be hoped there would be some diminution in the total amount of drinking; but where the houses are close together, the increased value consequent upon the extinction of a rival house would very nearly be in arithmetical proportion. The surviving licences would, therefore, be made more expensive and more difficult to purchase than before, and the County Councils would refuse to continue the operation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer derided the Mover of the Amendment on the ground that he has not provided any machinery for the working of his proposal. What sort of machinery has the Government provided for the working of their proposal? Why, it will become clogged as soon as it is started. The only way in which the scheme of the Government can be worked is by charging some additional duty on the remaining houses corresponding to the increase of value accruing to them through the purchase of rival houses. I believe, indeed, that some such step ought to have been taken long ago at the time when the Magistrates commenced to restrict the issue of licences. When there was free trade in licences, and as long as there was no restriction of the issue, there was no monopoly, but directly restriction was applied the monopoly began. The full value of that monopoly thus granted ought to have been charged on the publican by the State, so that the landlord would get only the fair rent of the house. An illustration was given in the Debate on the Second Reading of this Bill. Three houses were built at a cost of £1,000 each, and they let at £60 per annum each. The owner of one was fortunate enough to get a licence, and the letting value of his property was immediately raised by the sum of £140 per annum, for it was let at £200 per annum. The State, which gave this monopoly, ought to have charged the £140 to the owner of the licence, who would thus have had his £60 a year as before. Because licences have had an enormous monopoly given to them at under value, they say they are entitled to compensation or to a permanent continuance of their licences. A large number of generous landlords have let their lands at very much below their market value; but what would be thought of the tenants if, when a new owner raised the rents to the market value, they said "Oh, no; we have been in the enjoyment of these low rents for many years and it is unfair they should be raised, and we have a vested interest." The Legislature would not recognise that the rent could not be raised. The Legislature are very careful of *quasi*-vested interests of publicans and brewers, but they do not care a button about the *quasi*-vested interests of tenant farmers. The Legislature ought now to put up the value of these licences, whether there is compensation, purchase, or extinction or not, to the full market value of the monopoly granted, so that the landlord would get for his house what is the fair actual value of his house and no more. (8.25.)

*(9.0.) MR. LENG (Dundee): The Committee has no doubt observed a considerable change in the tone of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. When he introduced the Bill he was buoyant, hopeful, and jubilant; but to-night his tone was doubtful, hesitating, perplexed, and apologetic. The right hon. Gentleman seems to have been very much disappointed with the reception given to the Bill. He expected it would be hailed as an important auxiliary contribution to the cause of temperance, instead of which it has been repudiated by all the advocates of temperance.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

*MR. LENG: In the first place, the right hon. Gentleman referred to the genesis of the Bill; in the second place, he disputed the accuracy of the designation of the Bill—a Publicans' Endowment Bill; and, in the third place, he called in question the assertion that public opinion is adverse to the measure. Now, as to the origin of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman denies that the Bill was brought in on account of any pressure put upon the Government by the brewers and publicans. I at once accept his statement. I give the right hon. Gentleman and the Government credit for not having acted under any influence of that kind; but the right hon. Gentleman and the Government must have been very much disappointed in finding that it is from the publicans and brewers that almost the sole support for this measure is received. The right hon. Gentleman claims that it is a temperance Bill, but how is it that the Temperance Societies—that those who have taken a leading part in the advocacy of temperance for many years, one and all repudiate and oppose the measure? It is very remarkable that the plan adopted by the Government has never been suggested by the advocates of temperance. It seems to have been evolved entirely from the inner consciousness of the Members of the Government. When measures of this kind are introduced of a statesmanlike character we generally expect that reference will be made to experience, that precedents will be quoted, and that the plan will be shown to have worked well in other countries or in other places. It is remarkable that the Government have in their possession and have given to the country very valuable information with regard to the liquor traffic legislation in the United States. In answer to a Despatch from the Head of the Government, they have received from our Representative at Washington, who in turn received them from British Consuls in all the leading cities of the United States, very valuable Reports with regard to liquor traffic legislation. I have read these Reports with much care; but I looked in vain for anything to justify the plan that has been proposed. Application has also been made to the Colonial Governments for information on this subject. Some answers have been received; others can easily be obtained. In the Colony of Victoria a very valuable experiment has been made. That colony resolved to reduce the number of licences to a fixed number, according to population. They adopted a system of compensation, but, compared with what is introduced in this Bill, that was a wise system. It went on the plan that, as the number of licences were to be very largely reduced, and the value of the remaining licences would be increased, these licences should contribute to the Compensation Fund. If some plan like that had been proposed, it would have been entitled to consideration. The right hon. Gentleman objected to the term "endowment," but the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Bryn Roberts) has distinctly shown that we cannot reduce licences without adding a great deal to the value of the licences that remain. We have already had experience of another plan in the House. A former Government, sitting on those Benches, introduced a plan of time compensation—giving notice that after a certain number of years a licence should entirely lapse without claim to compensation. Although that measure was not accepted, there has been a very large growth of opinion in the interval in its favour, and, had the Government brought in a proposal to give compensation in time rather than in money, it would have been more favourably received than their present plan. In the Foreign Office Reports there is very satisfactory evidence that if we are to give money compensation at all, it would have been far better to have gone on the system of higher licences. What I contend is, that the benefit from any system of reduction should not go to the publicans or the brewers, but to the public. If the Forms of the House had allowed, I should have proposed an Instruction to the Committee or an Amendment to the Bill, that the public, and not the private, individual should get the benefit of the increased value of public houses by the diminution of the number. The whole question of pecuniary compensation is beset with difficulty, but, of all the plans that could have been adopted, it seems to me that the present proposal is the least defensible and the most objectionable. The third point to which the right hon. Gentleman referred was as to the expression of public opinion. It is very remarkable that, in the latest published enumeration of the Petitions presented to the House, there is a list of Petitions extending over 29 pages. This list was only from the 16th of May to the 2nd June; if it were brought up to this date I have little doubt the list would be twice as large. These Petitions come from Corporations and boroughs in England; and burghs in Scotland; Police Commissioners, Parochial Boards, and other Local Boards. The whole of these Petitions from these bodies are against the Compensation Clause, and not one in favour of it. They come from the inhabitants of cities and towns in public meeting assembled or otherwise. The whole of that class of Petitions is against the Compensation Clause and not one in favour of it. They come from officebearers or members of religious congregations, societies, Presbyteries, Sunday Schools and Bible classes. The whole of these are against the Compensation Clause, and not one in favour of it. They come from Temperance Societies, Temperance Lodges, Bands of Hope, and other Temperance Associations. If the Bill is such a temperance measure as the right hon. Gentleman would lead the House to suppose, is it not singular that there is not a single Temperance Society in the country petitioning for it, and that every Petition of that class also is against it? Then they come from Political Associations. I take very little account of these; but there are a considerable number of Petitions from *employés* on public works.

Every one of these is also against the clause. They come from Womens' Associations meetings. In ordinary politics I am one of those who are not anxious that women should interfere; but if there is any question on which they are entitled to express their opinion, it is with regard to public houses; and every Womens' Association that has petitioned the House on this subject has petitioned against the Bill. The total number of Petitions is upwards of 1,000, every one of which is against the Bill, and not one in favour of it. I think this fact ought to have considerable influence with the House. I am rather surprised that throughout the discussion it has been regarded rather as a matter of congratulation than otherwise that the County Councils should be entrusted with the disbursement of this money. From my observation and experience of Licensing Magistrates connected with Town Councils in Scotland, I think it is most objectionable that Boards which should be elected for the many important and useful objects connected with the administration of county affairs, and connected with the administration of city affairs, should be degraded by having anything to do with the administration of licences. It brings a most disastrous element into municipal elections. It will do the same with the county elections. The moment the publicans have an interest to put in certain men and keep certain other men out of representative bodies, it brings a malign influence to bear upon these bodies. If the question of licensing is to be given to elective bodies it would be infinitely better, both in towns and counties, that special Boards should be constituted for this special work. I will only trespass further on the patience of the House by reading a brief extract from the letter of a gentleman who has filled the office of Licensing Magistrate in my own constituency. That gentleman writes—

> "The authorities before they can extinguish a licence will have to 'enter into an agreement' with the licence holder, and presumably pay him a satisfactory price before such extinction can be effected. This seems to me to be an excessively weak part of the proposal. Publicans will not give up their licences, or 'enter into an agreement' to do so, except on very high terms, and you will readily perceive this when I tell you that £1,000 is no uncommon price to be paid for the good will of a public house business. The fact is licences can only be reduced in one of two ways—either by compulsion or a high licence duty, as in America; if the former plan be adopted, and if the principle of compensation be recognised, then a fixed principle of compensation must be laid down for the guidance of the authorities, otherwise endless difficulties would obviously rise; but the fact is public opinion will not tolerate the granting of compensation for licences which were got for nothing from the public representatives."

This is another of my objections to the proposal, that it is altogether unprincipled in respect that there is nothing set forth to guide the County Council or the Town Council as to the mode of procedure, as to the extent to which licences are to be reduced, or as to the manner and the amount of compensation to be paid. I thank the Committee for so attentively listening to my remarks.

*(9.22.) SIR E. REED (Cardiff): I had not intended to take any active part in this Debate, and I only rise now for the purpose of making an explanation concerning a matter which, in my temporary absence from the House, the President of the Local Government Board referred to. I understand that the right hon. Gentleman said that the Cardiff Corporation decided by a large majority in favour of this Bill. I have no doubt that is the reading which the right hon. Gentleman has given to what took place in the Cardiff Corporation, but that is not at all my rendering of what happened. A Member of the Council proposed that the Corporation should petition against the Bill, but an amendment was moved to the effect that the Cardiff Corporation had enough to do with its own business, and that dealing with this Bill was no part of its business. The amendment was virtually in effect the previous question. It is quite true that some of those gentlemen who supported the Amendment made some observations in favour of the Bill, but the decision which the Corporation came to in adopting the amendment is not, I submit, a decision in favour of the Bill but a decision against the Corporation dealing with the Bill at all. It seems to me that there is a very substantial difference. I am strongly of opinion, judging from my knowledge of almost every member of the Cardiff Corporation, that had the main question been divided upon, there would have been a majority in favour of it. That is only

my opinion; but certainly I do not think that the fact that an amendment discountenancing any action on the part of the Council in regard to the Bill was moved can be accepted as a decision of the Council in favour of the measure. That is the explanation I wish to give, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will either disprove the interpretation I have put upon the proceedings of the Corporation or relieve the Corporation from what, I venture to say, they will, and the public will, regard as an imputation upon them.

*MR. RITCHIE: It is necessary, after what the hon. Gentleman has stated, that I should say a word or two. A resolution was moved condemning the Bill, whereupon an amendment was proposed approving of the Bill. Every Member who spoke in support of the amendment, spoke in favour of the proposal of the Government. No one reading the speeches can for a single moment entertain any doubt as to what was the issue upon which the Cardiff Corporation voted. I could quote, if necessary, the words of the speakers, to show that they were in favour of the principle of the proposal of the Government. The division showed that 18 were in favour of the amendment, and nine against it, and all I can say is, that the fact that only nine Councillors out of 27 could be found to support the motion is a pretty good indication of the feeling of the Council.

*SIR E. REED: I hope I may respectfully differ from the right hon. Gentleman and say that the division had nothing whatever to do with the principle of the Bill. I can understand that the impression conveyed to the right hon. Gentleman's mind by a perusal of the reports of the debate in the papers, is such as he has stated, but I have no hesitation in stating that a careful study of the matter will establish the truth of what I have said, namely, that the Cardiff Corporation have expressed no opinion on the measure, but have only expressed their disinclination to deal with it.

(9.29.) MR. CALEB WRIGHT (Lancashire, S.W., Leigh): I desire to state what has taken place in the Leigh Division of Lancashire with respect to licensing. In that division there are 85 licensed houses; 59 or 69 per cent. of these belong to brewers and spirit merchants. Of beer-houses there are 149; 94 of these belong to brewers or spirit merchants. In the Return I moved for two years ago, and which was mentioned in the House the other night, the number of licences refused in that division is stated to be 48, but that is an error. I was on the Bench at the time, and the licences refused numbered 60. And this has been a great boon to the neighbourhood. The policy of refusal has led to a reduction in the amount of drunkenness. The Superintendent of Police in his Report to the Licensing Magistrates last year showed that there was a decrease of 140 on the previous year in the number of persons summoned for drunkenness, the number being the lowest recorded during the last eight years. Why, when the Magistrates are reducing the number of licences year by year without any compensation, should this Bill be introduced to pay compensation? The Superintendent goes on to say that this result is creditable to the Division, considering the rapid increase of population, and he says it may account for the large number of transfers of licences through inability of holders of licences to get a respectable livelihood. Well, but these people who cannot get a respectable livelihood are to be compensated! The changes in tenants of licensed houses owned by brewers are of frequent occurrence. When a tenant has committed a breach of the law, he is turned out, and the licence is transferred to another tenant. I could mention a number of such changes in Leigh Division. There is an instance of a public house having changed tenants eight times in eight years, and the house is owned by a brewer; one tenant was fined £5 for encouraging drunkenness, and others were fined for selling spirits diluted. But all these were men of high character, of course. I never knew an applicant for a licence being other than a man of high character. We were always told by the Clerk to the Justices that we could not refuse a licence to a man of known good character, when the house was suitable, and the men who applied were men of excellent character, but in the public Returns for the Division, we find that in the last eight years, 97 prosecutions have been brought against publicans—all of good character. Believing that if the licensing clauses are retained in the Bill they will greatly strengthen the hands of the publicans and the brewers, while they weaken those of the Temperance Party, I shall record my vote against this ill-advised proposal.

*(9.35.) MR. J. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthen, W.): This is a question upon which my constituents feel as much interested as upon any question which has engaged public attention during the time I have had the honour of a seat in this House. I must say that on most questions my constituents have not troubled me very much, but upon this subject I, day by day, receive representations and resolutions condemning, in the strongest possible manner, these clauses in the Bill now before us. I am bound to say I listened with some surprise to speeches delivered by right hon. Gentlemen opposite, who said, Surely you will give us credit for sincerity when we say these clauses were introduced in the interest of the cause of temperance. If they are under that impression then they have never made a greater blunder. These clauses are condemned throughout the whole country, and by every branch of the Temperance Party, except the Church of England Temperance Society, and not only so, but by all classes of people who are anxious to promote and encourage the cause of temperance. The discussion this evening has taken a different turn to what it did on Tuesday night when the Amendment was introduced by my hon. Friend the Member for Rotherham. I am not complaining at all of that, for I believe this is a good opportunity to offer as much and as strong an opposition as we can to the clause. This Amendment proposes to strike out the clause, and substitute another clause which shall empower County Councils to use the money in a different manner. Now, in reference to this proposal I wish to speak particularly from a Welsh point of view. The latter part of the Amendment deals specifically with Wales and the questions of technical and intermediate education. An Act for the promotion of intermediate education was passed last Session, and it has just come into operation, and very naturally the Welsh people are taking a deep interest in the subject. But they unfortunately find that there is one great difficulty in the way. Committees have been constituted under that Act; they have met in most counties — certainly they have in mine.— but when we find them coming together to put the Act into operation, and to consider the amount of the endowments at their disposal, they discover that they have not the funds necessary to carry the Act into efficient operation. Applications are made to them for the establishment of schools in different centres — applications reasonable enough — which they would willingly accede to, but they have one serious obstacle in their way—want of money. The rate is not sufficient to enable them to put the Act into thorough operation, and the endowments over which they have control do not enable them to establish more than two or three schools where perhaps half-a-dozen are required. I have pointed out that the Welsh people, at any rate, are strongly opposed to the clause we are now considering. I can speak of my own constituency, and, in doing that, I believe I represent the feeling of the Welsh people generally. I am very glad to find that my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff, has been able to explain, what to me was at first inexplicable, namely, the action of the Cardiff Town Council. I say that in Wales we have the strongest feeling against the application of money in this way, and even if this Bill does become law, I am sure that, so far as Wales is concerned, it will become absolutely a dead letter, for if the County Councils have the money they will not apply it to any such purpose as is contemplated in this clause; they dare not do so if they have any respect for, or expectation of support from, their constituents, who, I know, would at the proper time visit such a Council with the severest censure expressed in a very practical way. So, then, the position we find the Government in with regard to Wales is this:—The Welsh people want this money for one purpose, for the cause of education; they do not want it for the purpose for which the Government propose to give it them. It appears to me, therefore, that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Rotherham is, so

far as it refers to Wales, a wise and important one. The position the Government take up is this. We will give you this money for a purpose for which you will not use it; but you shall not have it for the purpose for which you do require it. Now that appears to me to be an utterly indefensible position, and I hope the strongest opposition will be offered to the clauses, and I shall give my hearty support to the Amendment.

*(9.47.) MR. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): The forcible speech we have just heard ought to do something towards convincing the Government that in Wales, at least, the feeling is very strong in opposition to these clauses. Can there be anything more absurd than the position the Government take up in giving this money for purposes for which it is not required, and denying it where it is really needed? One great defect in the proposal is that it absolutely ties the hands of County Councils to one specific object for the money. An ordinary and reasonable proposal would be to give the County Councils free hand for the purpose; give them a certain discretion, and if among the purposes for which you think the money ought to be devoted the extinction of licences is one, then say so, and let the Councils apply it to that, or to an alternative purpose. Why insist that Welsh people should use it towards the extinction of licences? Why not let them have freedom to use it for educational institutions? The result would be instructive, I think, if Wales had such an alternative purpose. The Amendment of the hon. Member for Rotherham is confined to educational purposes, but I should have preferred a wider Amendment, which would leave the Councils at liberty to do as they thought fit. It is a peculiarity of the Local Government Board that they never can view with equanimity the devolution of any powers to Local Bodies; they always view such bodies with jealousy. We are told that we object from a Party point of view, but this cannot be said with regard to those Liberal Unionists who oppose these clauses. We have had a very powerful speech from the hon. Member for the Tradeston Division of Glasgow, who is a supporter of the Government, who regrets to have to break his allegiance, and he has warned the Government that they are likely to lose a large amount of Liberal Unionist support. The hon. Member for Barrow has told us distinctly, on another occasion, that this will cause a great split in the Liberal Unionist ranks, and I am inclined to think that, when we consider the general uprising created by the introduction of this Bill, we may recall the words of a well known Irishman, not a Member of this House, that "Somebody has thrown down an apple of discord which has burst into flame and flooded the country." These proposals have flooded the country with a storm of indignation. I do not know why, except from an impression that there would be a loss of dignity in receding from their position, the Government do not withdraw these clauses. The President of the Local Government Board claims that this is an honest effort in the cause of temperance, and he mentioned an Amendment for safeguarding these licences from having any vested interest given them they do not now possess; but our objection is not that this proposal may give a licence a greater legal value, but that it gives it a moral value beyond that it now possesses. The increase in value cannot be prevented by any words the Government may put into the Bill. It seems to me the Temperance Party ought to know what the effect of the Bill will be; their leaders here and outside have devoted years to the study of the question, and should know it, if anybody does. The Government profess to believe the Bill is brought in in the interest of temperance, and the right hon. Gentleman cannot understand why the measure should be met with such bitter opposition. But I should like to know is he, or the Temperance Party, likely to be the best judge of the operation of the Bill? No doubt the right hon. Gentleman is a good friend of temperance. I know nothing to the contrary; but he has not given it his special attention; he has not made it his life's work, as many Members here have done. If he, with the best intentions, finds himself on one side and the Temperance Party on the other side, which is likely to be the right side for the temperance cause? I do not know where the Government find

support, except among those interested in the liquor traffic. We have had a mistake corrected, into which the right hon. Gentleman fell. The Cardiff Corporation did not pass a resolution in favour of the Bill. It simply amounted to this: that, by 18 to 9, the Cardiff Corporation declined to pass a resolution condemning the Bill; but if this proves anything at all, it proves that there were some members of the Corporation who would have liked to have passed a resolution in favour of the Bill, but that they did not dare to put such a resolution upon their Minutes in view of the feeling they knew to exist among their fellow-townsmen. One serious objection to the measure has been made more serious by words used by the right hon. Gentleman tonight. He said he was in favour of transferring the Licensing Authority to popularly-elected bodies, meaning, obviously, County Councils. Now, I do not think there are any popularly-elected bodies more unfit for such powers than County Councils; and if this Bill is passed, it is the first step towards such a transfer. Their area is far too large; they cannot understand in a large county the details of the licensing question in various localities. The elected body, to deal with such a question, is a body elected over a small area and for the license question specially. I do not want to repeat the argument that owners, and not occupiers, of public houses will be compensated. I take it that is admitted. But when we speak of brewers and distillers, we are apt to think of individuals and small firms; but, unhappily, the brewing interest is now far greater, and divided among thousands of shareholders. I should like to know how many Members of this House are shareholders in breweries and distilleries. I should like to see a Return. It would be an interesting one. I am inclined to think, if strict views were taken, it would be difficult for those hon. Members to vote in favour of this clause, because they possess a pecuniary interest in it. I think the Government would be wise to adopt this Amendment; it would have the assent of all sections; and if our votes here could be taken by ballot, I believe it would be carried by a large majority. It would be to the interest of all to have this money devoted to technical education under the Act passed in the closing days of last Session, and which I supported. This measure has not been largely adopted, simply from the lack of funds and the indisposition of County Councils to levy a rate for the purpose. Place, however, a large sum like this at the discretion of Councils, and you will find the Act will be largely adopted and carried out successfully. It is easier to get the Act into operation in boroughs than in counties; in boroughs the people are familiar with Mechanics' Institutes and other means of instruction, and are more alive to the advantages of technical education. In counties the teaching of agriculture is urgently required. The Cheshire Chamber of Agriculture has made great efforts to get the Act into force in that county; but it was found that the Council would not agree to levy a rate, and were not likely to take it up, and so the Chamber fell back upon voluntary subscriptions and a subsidy from an endowed grammar school. But if the Cheshire Council had the money at their disposal, they would start a series of agricultural schools and dairy schools throughout Cheshire. I think Cheshire was the first county that took up the question of agricultural instruction, and what has been done in this direction has greatly improved the manufacture of cheese and butter. But the farmers generally will not take up the Technical Instruction Act. I earnestly hope the Government may re-consider their proposals and devote this money to the purposes of the Act. Other counties are far more generous, and spend scores of thousands on agricultural education. We have here a magnificent opportunity of putting our schools throughout the country on a satisfactory footing, and of making them equal to the schools of France, Belgium, and Denmark; and I think if the Government accepted this Amendment, they would establish for themselves a claim to greater gratitude than can possibly result from their present proposal.

*(10.1.) Mr. G. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.): I do not think that I recollect any question upon which there has been such a unanimous opinion as is instanced in the opposition

to this Bill. Ever since it has been printed I have done little less than present Petitions and acknowledge resolutions against it. Indeed, I have only received one resolution in its favour, and that was passed by a meeting of licensed victuallers, who, of course, advocate the Bill not for the direct benefits they will derive from it, but on account of the indirect benefits which are involved in the recognition of their right to compensation.. You call this a temperance measure; but how is it that every single body connected with the temperance movement in the country—with one exception—has taken up the cudgels against the Bill? That exception is a portion of the Church of England Temperance Association, which, I fear, has shown itself to be "Church first and temperance afterwards." I am afraid the nature of this Amendment has been somewhat lost sight of in this discussion. I heartily re-echo the observation of my hon. Friend who said that if this Bill were passed tomorrow it would remain a dead letter in Wales. I go further. I believe that the popular feeling in Wales is so intensely against this Bill that no County Council would dare to touch the money provided under it with a pair of tongs, or with the tips of their little fingers. But there is a purpose for which we really do want this money. Wales is eager for education, but it is badly provided with the material means for obtaining it; and the Government now have an opportunity of providing those means.. If we could take a *plébiscite* of the inhabitants, I think it would be found that 99-100ths of the population would vote in favour of the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Rotherham; and the adoption of that Amendment would enable you to legislate in accordance with the wishes of the people of the Principality. I am sorry to say it is a common saying in Wales that the present Government do their best to find out what the Welsh people do not want, and then, having found out that, they do their very best to give it to them. Why should the Government endeavour to force legislation down the throats of the people which they dislike? The Chancellor of the Exchequer the other day said that there was no machinery in existence by which the Amendment of the hon. Member for Rotherham could be put in force even if it were carried. But he was speaking without book, because the machinery is there. The right hon. Gentleman cannot have perused the Welsh Intermediate Education Act, for which I give the present Government full credit. It provides most ample and perfect machinery for giving effect to this Amendment. It provides that a halfpenny rate shall be paid to a certain body to be constituted for educational purposes, and that rate shall be met by an equal sum from the public Exchequer. I am confident that if the Amendment were carried we should not find the slightest difficulty in the matter of machinery for working it. It is the money that we require, and I appeal to the Government on the ground that Wales is unanimously in favour of this Amendment, to agree to it. I say it is monstrous that you should force upon the people that which they do not want, and at the same time refuse them that which, without distinction of class or party, they all demand.

*(10.9.) Mr. B. COLERIDGE (Sheffield, Attercliffe): I listened with interest to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. He seemed to deal with two points, and two points only. Firstly, he argued that the people were with the Government; and, secondly, he denied that this was an "endowment of publican" proposal. In support of his first proposition the right hon. Gentleman showed that amongst all the Temperance Bodies of this Kingdom only one had voted in favour of the Bill, and that in the case of the Town Council of Cardiff there had been a divided vote. If that is the idea of hon. Gentlemen opposite of people being with them, why, then, I wish them joy. Secondly, he urged that the large meetings which had been held in opposition to the Bill were entirely in error in running away with cries which had no meaning, and one cry which he asserted to be meaningless was that this Bill constituted an endowment of the publican. I always understood endowment to mean a free gift of money, and I venture to say that if this is anything it is a free gift of money to the publican. First, we are asked to give the money on the

footing of annual licences being a vested form of property. But all persons, whether legal or lay, with one eminent exception, are of opinion that a publican's licence is renewable annually, and is revocable without his having any legal right to compensation. What class of houses is it proposed that the Local Authorities shall have the power of buying up? Why, just those badly-conducted or superfluous houses which the Justices have the right to close at their discretion. If there is anything settled it is this: that in the case of ill-regulated houses, and in the case of houses for which there is no need in a locality, there is an absolute discretion in law for the Justices to take these licences away, and you are now going to give them money for that which has no legal existence at all. Now, whom are you going to compensate? In most cases the persons who will be compensated under the Bill will be not the publicans, who are in general mere care-takers, but the brewers. We all know that the allurement held out to investors in Brewery Companies is that all the beer is supplied to tied houses, and in the course of the Debate to-night we have been told that 80 per cent. of all the licensed houses in the United Kingdom are tied, and that in the greater number of cases the publican is a mere care-taker, and that the real owner is the brewer. Now, I can quite understand a free and voluntary gift of an eleemosynary character. I can quite understand persons giving free gifts out of their own pockets to poor and deserving persons. But in this case the money to be given is the taxpayers' money; and, in the second place, I never met anybody who had met anybody else who had seen or heard of a brewer who was poor. About a year ago, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to place an additional burden upon the brewers, a deputation from that body waited upon him to protest against its imposition. The right hon. Gentleman saw through the position at a glance, and he asked the members of the deputation whether they could honestly say that they were too poor to bear the increased taxation, upon which all of them went away sorrowful, for they had great possessions. These, then, are not the men to whom public money should be given. You are making a free gift out of other persons money to what is, perhaps, the richest class of Her Majesty's subjects. Now, I can understand your doing this by way of gratitude for past services, but gratitude has also been described as "expectation of favours to come." I think hon. Gentlemen opposite are rather too timorous and faint-hearted with regard to the ties which bind them to the brewers. I can assure them that if they were to accept this Amendment they would, nevertheless, have the support of the brewers at the next election. But they seem to look upon this as a bargain between themselves and the brewer. They say to them, "We will give you so much money in return for the support which you give us." I think there is no consideration for the bargain between the Government and the brewers; and, therefore, the Government might, out of mercy to the intelligence of the House, spare us these continued references to their duty to the House and the country which are so often made by the Leader of the House. I own I am astonished that a country with such a wide franchise as we possess, a country which is supposed to be at the head of the industrial countries of the world, should refuse to accept this Amendment, and to approve the devotion of this money to that purpose which, I believe, almost every other European country, as well as America, has devoted money to. Speaking on behalf of an industrial constituency, I must say that we feel that we are sadly behind other nations in the industrial race; and, therefore, I do hope that if this money is to be taken out of the taxpayers' pockets the Government will see that it is applied in a manner which will aid us in the industrial race which all the great civilised nations of the world are now engaged in running.

(10.20.) MR. AMBROSE (Middlesex, Harrow): The hon. and learned Member who last spoke has referred to this Bill as in the nature of a bargain between the Government and the brewer, but he has not attempted to show what is the nature of that bargain, and I challenge him to point out anything of the kind. This is neither a public house endowment Bill nor is it a bargain. I grant that licences are renewable annually, and that Magistrates have power to refuse the renewal. But it must be borne in mind that while the Magistrates have absolute power, the decision in "Sharp *v.* Wakefield" only goes so far as to say that the power must be exercised in a judicial manner. They must not exercise their powers in an arbitrary manner. Indeed, I believe the Magistrates of this country have too much *esprit de corps* to act in such a manner; they have always acted on the principle of renewing a licence unless there be a distinct case made out either that the house is ill managed, or that it is not required in the neighbourhood. You may say that the publicans have no vested interest, but that is not true. They have an absolute interest in the licences for the term, at all events, of one year; and, coupled with that, is the expectation that in the ordinary course of things the licence will be renewed. This interest, although a little uncertainty attaches to it, is recognised, and it is a marketable commodity. I heard the hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth, in his speech on the Second Reading of this Bill, state that the decision of the Magistrates absolutely increased the market value of the interest of the publicans in their licences. How, then, can it be said that this is an endowment proposal? I have dealt with the right of the Magistrates to refuse to renew the licence. You may have a Bench of Magistrates saying that, in their judgment, the licence ought to be renewed, and you may have the Local Authority—the County Council or the Local Board it may be—come to the conclusion that the licence ought not to be renewed. What is to be done under these circumstances? You cannot compel the Magistrates, exercising judicial authority, to refuse to renew the licence if, in their judgment, it seems to them just to grant it. On the other hand, if the Local Authority thinks the licence is unnecessary for the neighbourhood, all that this Bill does in such a case is to empower the Local Authority to buy up the licence, and so close the public house. Under these circumstances, surely hon. Gentlemen cannot say that this is an endowment of public houses. We are anxious, in promoting this Bill, to promote the cause of temperance, and I hold that this cause can be best promoted by reducing the number of public houses in this manner. You propose to extend the powers of the Local Authorities, and especially County Councils, while you leave the Magistrates' discretion absolute. Does the hon. Member mean to say that if, in the case of a difference of opinion between the County Councils and the Magistrates as to the necessity for a licensed house, the Council buy up the house, their action amounts to the endowment of a publican? If the publican is anxious to sell it will not matter to him whether he sells to the County Council or to anyone else; he knows that he can easily find 20 purchasers, and the mere refusal of the Local Authority to buy would mean the continuance of the business, even if it be a nuisance to the neighbourhood. We are bound to bear in mind that this Bill has been brought forward in the interests of the temperance cause. It gives powers to the localities to suppress public houses, and I must confess that I am at a loss to understand the honourable intentions of hon. Members on the other side of the House in the opposition they are offering to this measure. I cannot understand the grounds on which they object to a measure which proposes to enable the Local Authorities to buy up the public houses, the evil results of which Members opposite so strongly object to. Up to the present time there has been little or no restriction in the granting of new licences, but under this measure there are ample powers for enforcing these restrictions. I must add that I honestly regard this Bill as a measure for the promotion of temperance, and I believe that it will have the effect of bringing about a considerable reduction in the number of our public houses.

(10.35.) MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I object so strongly to the whole principle on which this Bill is founded, mixing up, as it does, local and Imperial finance, and devoting special sums for special purposes from the Imperial resources, that I shall be very sorry if any proposal in this Bill is carried at all. The great want at the present moment is that a vastly larger amount of public money should be devoted to such national objects as improved technical education and the increased efficiency of intermediate education. While the proposals under discussion have been described by the President of the Local Government Board as very small, they will, in my opinion, ultimately involve a national outlay of something like £200,000,000, an expenditure which I trust this House will not agree to sanction.

(10.40.) **Mr. LONG**: The remarks of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down opens up a wide field. He was good enough to apologise to the Committee for intervening, but I do not think any apology was necessary from the hon. Gentleman, who has spoken on a subject with which he is so well acquainted. The hon. Gentleman hardly does the Government justice, I think, with regard to the Welsh Education Act of last year, and I have no doubt Welsh Members will admit what the hon. Member for Poplar kindly seems inclined to admit, that the Government, in the midst of great pressure of business, voluntarily gave their assistance to the measure. I have the very best reason for knowing that had it not been for the action of the Government the Bill would not have passed into law. I think, therefore, that the remarks of the hon. Member were rather unfair.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: The reason I mentioned it was this. We were told by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the Government took the whole credit of the Bill, and I only wished to show that there was a combination of credit. I quite agree with what the hon. Member now says.

Mr. LONG: I am very glad to find that we are in agreement now. I think his most temperate and practical remarks will commend themselves to my right hon. Friend at the head of the Education Department. But I would like to remind the Committee that this is not the Second Reading of the Bill. We are now in Committee, and we have decided the principle of the Bill on the Second Reading, namely, that certain funds should be provided for the extinction of licences. Amendments in the direction of education go beyond the scope of ordinary Amendments, and would, if accepted, deprive the Bill of its principal feature. An hon. Member has said that he regarded the Bill with apprehension because, if County Councils were empowered to buy out the owners of licences now, it would be impossible in equity to extinguish licences in future without purchase. But surely, if hon. Members opposite at some future time are in a position to legislate for the extinction of licences in a different way, the present measure would be no obstacle to their action. The hon. Member for Stepney has quoted an actual case in support of his contention that there is nothing in the Bill which will enable the publican to obtain his share of the compensation together with the brewer and the distiller. If the words in the Bill are not already broad enough to include the publican, the Government will be prepared to make the necessary Amendment, so as to leave the matter perfectly clear. The intention of the Government is, that any money paid for the extinction of licences should be paid amongst all who have a share in the property, without detriment to the smaller owner. The hon. Member for Carnarvonshire said that if, under the Bill, the County Councils bought up licences they would only enhance the value of those that remain. The Bill does not propose to limit the value of the property to be purchased, because it is desired that the County Councils shall go into the matter as perfectly free agents, able to make the best terms that they can. But this is a point which has been well raised, and the Government will consider it before they come to the part of the Bill which refers to the matter. The hon. Member for the Cirencester Division has made one of the most interesting speeches delivered on this subject. But the hon. Member asked the Committee to believe that the Bill is hostile to the views of those who advocate temperance, and is indeed distinctly a publican Bill, because it is condemned by the Temperance Party and advocated by the publican interest. Why is this so? From the very first the Temperance Party has attacked the proposals of the Government with all the virulence they can command, and the publican interest has been driven, not altogether willingly, to take up the cudgels in defence of a measure which, if not very friendly, is, at all events, equitable. But I am not concerned to justify our action in the eyes of hon. Gentlemen opposite, for between them and the Government there is admitted to be a wide gulf on the liquor traffic question. We both wish to advance the temperance movement; but hon. Gentlemen opposite will not even admit that the Bill represents in any sense an advance of the temperance cause—though licences are extinguished, and it is made impossible for fresh licences to be issued—because money is to be paid to the publican. The hon. Member for Cirencester made a great point of the fact that there are so many tied houses, and that the occupiers are liable to dismissal at six months' notice. But as a matter of practice, in the vast majority of cases, the occupiers retain the same premises for a very long time. They continue in their premises from year to year, and notice is never unfairly served upon them. Then it is said that very many breweries have been turned into public companies; that they own all the houses in particular districts; and that they will greatly benefit by some of the houses being bought up—the cost of distribution being decreased, while the monopoly is maintained. I should like to point out that at the conclusion of his remarks the hon. Gentleman gave the answer to his own contention, for he told the Committee that in many cases the brewers had paid very large sums of money for the houses they had acquired—that they had paid big prices to keep out competition. Well, if they are prepared to pay these large prices we may question whether they will be willing to sell at the price the County Councils will be willing to pay. We have heard a great deal about the millions of expenditure which the Government proposals will involve. The hon. Member for Cirencester (Mr. Winterbotham) says that this is the thin end of the wedge — that hon. Gentlemen do not so much object to this £350,000 as to the hundreds of millions which will be the final result of this initial expenditure. The enormous total of numerous millions is not arrived at by taking the average, or even a moderate proportion of the public houses. It is arrived at, as far as I can ascertain, on the basis of the most valuable public houses, and by supposing that every public house will be closed. That I maintain is preposterous. Do hon. Members opposite really believe that all those millions will be spent before a sufficient number of public houses is closed in this country? Do not the most determined opponents of the liquor trade, such as the hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth and the hon. Member for Barrow and their supporters, think that some substantial good will be done by reducing the number of public houses; and are they unwilling that that good shall be done because a certain sum of money must be paid by the County Councils before those public houses are closed? With regard to the point that this is not public money, I would observe that when that expression was used there was no idea of contending that all taxes were not public money. What we merely meant to lay down was that this is a new additional tax specially proposed by the Government for a special purpose, and imposed upon a section of the community in order to be devoted to that particular purpose; and also that that tax is not to be imposed upon the whole country. Some hon. Members opposite shake their heads, but I defy them to prove that the party who object to the consumption of alcoholic liquor will suffer under the devotion of the money to this particular purpose. If they object to it, all they have to do is to refrain from indulging in those luxuries out of which the money will be obtained. One other remark I want to refer to. The Member for Denbighshire asserted that in Wales the powers conferred by this Bill will not be exercised, and he added that if the members of any County Council make use of those powers they will be turned out. I trust that that is an inaccurate description of what will be the action of the County Councils; but even if it is a true one no substantial difficulty will arise. After all, what would be the worst outcome of such action on the part of the County Councils? If they refuse to put the Act into operation the worst result will be that the money will accumulate, and then what an opportunity will be afforded to hon. Gentlemen opposite when they come into office to make provision for all those objects which are so near to their hearts. They will not only be able to bring into action such energy as they may possess, but they will have the satisfaction of knowing that they have an accumulation of funds wherewith they can carry out their own views.

(11.5.) MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, in the speech he made in the earlier part of the evening, recognised that the question before the Committee was one of the main questions in the Bill; that the question whether the words "extinction of licences" should stand part of the clause was one of vital importance, deserving the fullest consideration of the Committee. He took the opportunity of delivering what I may regard as the official defence of the Government scheme. Well, I must say—and I have the greatest possible respect for my right hon. Friend—that I was very much disappointed with his speech. I know that if he has anything like a good case no man is better able to make the best of it than my right hon. Friend; and I must confess I did believe after the attitude the Government have taken, seeing that they have nailed this clause to the mast, and are determined to go on with the Bill through evil report and good report, and seeing that they have recognised that there is a considerable amount of public feeling on this question, that the right hon. Gentleman would have made a broader and a more complete defence of the present proposal. The right hon. Gentleman's answer was exceedingly narrow, as he confined himself to the motive of the Government, and to one particular object which he thinks this clause will secure. His defence of the motive of the Government was that the Bill was brought in to promote the cause of temperance. Now, I am not going to cast the slightest discredit on the motive of the right hon. Gentleman; but I will put to him, as a man of strong common sense, and of considerable experience in public and official affairs, what are the probabilities of the case. Is it reasonable to suppose that those who have always been advocates of temperance are opposing a measure intended to promote the cause of temperance, while those who have not previously been distinguished by sympathy with the temperance cause are advocating this measure because it will promote that cause? The right hon. Gentleman talked about the ignorance and want of thought of the temperance advocates on this question. Will he apply that criticism to the acute mind of Cardinal Manning? Does Cardinal Manning understand the temperance question? Is he not above all political partisanship on this question? ["No, no."] Will any hon. Member opposite who dissents rise and state his opinion, so that Cardinal Manning may be able to answer it? It is a matter of notoriety that on the temperance question Cardinal Manning has maintained an absolutely impartial position. There are also Church of England men, like Archdeacon Farrar, Canon Wilberforce, and the Archbishop of York, who view the Government proposal with disfavour. And you have practically the whole of the Nonconformist bodies of the country taking up a strong position in opposition to the Bill. The argument of the Government is that all these men are deluded. It is not a question as to whether they are right or wrong, but that they are deluded into the belief that this measure will not promote the cause of temperance. What would have been thought by our forefathers 50 years ago, if that argument had been used to the leading opponents of the Slave Trade in the West Indies, supposing a proposal had been made which its promoters intended would put an end to the slavery, but which they believed would have no such effect? I do not cast the slightest doubt on the motive of the right hon. Gentleman. I accept literally the statement that it is the desire of the Government to promote the cause of temperance; but I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is not clear that the overwhelming public opinion of the country differs from him on this question, and that the men most competent to form an opinion have come to the contrary conclusion? The right hon. Gentleman referred to one section of the Nonconformists, about which I know something, with reference to their action in this matter. I endorse every word which the right hon. Gentleman said as to Sir George Chubb. No doubt Sir George Chubb was an opponent of the view which prevailed at the meeting at which I myself was present, and I admit that there are a considerable number of those who share Sir George Chubb's views on religious questions who also share his views on this question; but, speaking with some knowledge on this matter, and from the number of resolutions which have been placed in my hands during the last six weeks, I assert that the overwhelming majority—I am within the mark when I say that nine-tenths—of the Wesleyan ministers and laymen in this country who take a deep interest in the temperance question are opposed to the present measure. But I do not rest this on the ground of Wesleyan Nonconformists only. I ask the right hon. Gentleman—and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby has asked the same thing—to give me the name of some responsible leader of English Nonconformists, Baptist or Independent, some man whose name carries weight, who has put that name to a declaration in favour of the principle of this Bill. I pass on to another point. The right hon. Gentleman found fault with the phrase "public house endowment." That phrase was coined by my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian, and as it is the intention of my right hon. Friend to take part in the Debate on this Amendment I will not presume to anticipate what he will say, because he is well able to defend his own child. But it is said that the specific tax with which the Committee is now dealing does not form part of the general Revenue of the country, but is some specific imposition raised for a specific purpose. I object to that doctrine absolutely, not only because it is incorrect in fact, but because it is unsound in principle. The Revenue of the country is one and indivisible. From whatever sources it is raised it passes into one common treasury; and when the House of Commons is spending money, whether on the Army, the Navy, the Civil Services, or in expenditure of the kind we are now considering, it is equally the money of all the taxpayers of the country, no matter from what source it may be drawn. Two years ago, or last year, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer added very largely to the taxes upon the succession of property, and he added at the same time very largely to the expenditure on the Navy. Well, would the right hon. Gentleman contend that he has earmarked that duty, and that in future it is only to be applied to that purpose? Nothing of the kind. It has gone into the common purse. But the present case is much stronger. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his Budget speech, told us that it is the duty of the Finance Minister to raise as wide a revenue as he could on spirits; and all Members will agree that if he is raising a less duty from spirits than spirits will bear, and keeping the duty on tea and everything else, he is practically raising the duty on tea and reducing that on spirits. It is clear that spirits will bear this additional 6d. per gallon; and, that being the case, the increased tax ought to go into the general Revenue, and we ought to be relieved from some other tax that is pressing heavily on the masses. What was the one motive and reason which the right hon. Gentleman gave in justification of this Bill? He said it would diminish the number of public houses. Am I putting it unfairly to the right hon. Gentleman when I say that this is not really the basis on which his case rests? There are several answers to that plea, but I will meet the right hon. Gentleman on his own ground. The right hon. Gentleman asks, "Is it desirable to decrease the number of public houses?" It is desirable to diminish the number, if we can do so, at such a rate and to such an extent as will effect an appreciable diminution. If we only diminish the number by a few here and there, we do not do anything for temperance; we only enrich the owners that are left; and certainly £350,000 a year spread over the public houses of the country cannot effect any appreciable diminution in the number of public houses. What the Bill does, and what we object to, is that while it will not promote the cause of temperance in diminishing the number of public houses it will add to the value of those that remain; and if we added to the value of the whole of the public house property, we shall be giving it that endowment to which reference has been made, and we shall render it more difficult to deal with this question in the future. The argument on the other side is that the decision of "Sharp *v.* Wakefield" must be reversed; that a licence is everything except strictly legal, that it has a market value, and therefore if the public want the article they must pay for it. The only concession the right hon. Gentleman has said he is prepared to make is to the Church of England Temperance Societies, when he said that he was prepared to accept some Amendment to insert words providing that the Justices should have precisely the same power in future as they have at present. But I do not know that there is anything in the Bill to take this power away. I contend that no Bench of Magistrates in the Kingdom will, after this Bill is passed, shut up one public house or refuse to renew a licence. But who is going to receive this money? The right hon. Gentleman says that for the first time on this side of the House there is some interest shown in what he calls "the poor publican." Well, Sir, I do not agree with him. I have heard throughout the Debates we have had on the temperance question a strong opinion expressed on the Liberal side that the man who is deprived of the means of carrying on his living has an equitable claim for compensation. But our contention is that as the Bill stands no compensation will be given to the "poor publican," but that it will go to the brewers only.

*MR. RITCHIE: The Government are perfectly prepared, if the necessity is shown, to insert words which will enable the County Councils to consider the claims of the licensed occupier.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: Has the occupier such an interest in the premises as is capable of being dealt with under the Bill? We have been told again and again that nine-tenths of the licences in the country are in the hands, not of the occupier, but of the brewer. The brewers have speculated in this class of property, and they have been deriving such an enormous profit from it that they are recouping themselves year by year. I see in the prospectus of the Walker Brewery Company the statement that, in addition to immense profits being shared, ample provision is set aside for the depreciation of property and for the extinction of leases or goodwill. In these circumstances, it is unjust and unfair to call upon the public to provide this money. The *Investment Register* on "Brewery Companies and Legislation" says—

> "A cloud of uncertainty has now been removed from the prospects of the 'licensed trade,' as the legislative proposals for the present Session are before the world. There had been a slight apprehension amongst all concerned in the welfare of the 'trade,' such as brewers, distillers, and even brewery shareholders. The worst is now known, and on examination of the several proposals which have been made by Mr. Ritchie and Lord Randolph Churchill it becomes quite certain that nobody is going to be hurt."

Then, after having criticised at considerable length the proposals of my noble Friend—who I regret is not here to defend his views—they proceed to deal with the Government proposal. They say—

> "For our present purpose, however, in the interests of brewery shareholders, the most important thing is that in both legislative projects compensation holds a leading and conspicuous place."

The article proceeds—

> "Although this principle was dropped in 1888, so as to save the remainder of a very important Bill, the Government returns to it as a sound and rational thing, and the country has become educated up to it. There is every probability of its being carried this time, as the Government has taken a firm and decided position, from which it is not in the least likely to retreat with such a majority as Lord Salisbury commands. The double proposals make it certain that the whole weight of the majority will go in its favour. Brewery shareholders may, therefore, be congratulated on the sense of security which this equitable concession will bring to them, and while there is time to act we confidently recommend investors to buy all well-selected shares that can be had at moderate prices, and not to part with any good brewery securities which they may already have in possession."

MR. LONG: What are you reading from?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: The *Investment Register*. Again they have an article on Brewery Investment, in which they say—

> "There is generally a solid foundation of freehold property, to begin with, in the brewery itself, and in a proportion, at all events, of the tied houses. With this there is a fixity of tenure, and no chance of disagreeable surprises from leases falling in, and landlords coming forward to claim the unearned increment of a confiscatory rent. This is the first solid security for the capital invested. The next is in

the permanency of the trade. From time to time there is apt to be a misgiving on this point. The aggressive character of total abstinence and temperance advocates causes an occasional apprehension as to the future. There is, however, no reason to fear that any harm will happen to brewers as a whole. . . The large breweries now hold the field, and so much do these contribute to the welfare of the country and the stability of the national finances, that no Government can afford to be hostile to the brewing interest, or to sanction any measures likely to be detrimental to its productivity."

I will only trouble the House with one other quotation. The *Financial Times* said on May 3rd:—

> "Mr. Ritchie's Licensing Bill, which was issued yesterday, is sure to receive attentive perusal and a very wide circulation, for, if carried in anything like its present form, it will add immensely to the value of licensed property of the better kind."

Now, these people know their own business quite well. They thoroughly understand what this measure will do. We understand what it will do, and it is because we appreciate the force of their negotiation, and because we believe that this Bill, if carried, will strike a fatal blow at all temperance legislation for the future, that we give to it our strenuous opposition. Practically, the Bill amounts to the abolition of the Justices' power, root and branch, and to the assertion that no public house shall be deprived of its licence unless compensation is paid, not to the man who is carrying on the business, not to the man who is deprived of his living by legislative action—and, speaking for myself, I say that under such circumstances a man has a strong claim on the Legislature for compensation—but to the brewer or owner, to the shareholders in these large companies. You will compensate them for the termination of property from which they have already derived enormous revenues, those revenues being based on the contingent nature of their property. The fact that every brewery share in England has risen in value since the Bill was brought in is a most eloquent condemnation of the measure.

*(11.36.) Mr. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars): It has been said upon the opposite Benches that this is a measure in favour of temperance, but, with the exception of a small section of the Church of England Temperance Society, it is condemned by all the friends of temperance. It is argued that the measure will result in the lessening of the consumption of intoxicating drink, and yet every person connected with the trade is in favour of the Bill. The sum set aside is utterly inadequate to allow of anything substantial being done in the direction of temperance. Several estimates have been made of the cost of buying up all the houses in the country. The hon. Member for Barrow (Mr. Caine) has estimated the cost at £300,000,000. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain), when he proposed the adoption of the Gottenburg system, estimated that he could buy all the public houses in Birmingham for £1,200,000. As these licences represent somewhere about 1 per cent. of all the licences in the country, the cost, according to that estimate, of buying up all licences will be £120,000,000. But another estimate was made with regard to Birmingham by another Birmingham man, who was fitted, from his position, to form a very accurate idea of the value of public houses. This was a Mr. Edwards, who was then the secretary of the Licensed Victuallers Defence League. Reviewing the figures of the right hon. Gentleman, Mr. Edward said the calculations were clever, but altogether wrong. The right hon. Gentleman, he said, estimated that in a town with a population of 400,000, the licences could be bought up for £1,200,000; but, he added, £3,000,000 would not be sufficient to do so. He adds:—

> "Such an achievement, applying, as it should, to all persons directly interested, and to the £130,000 of capital invested would make all previous achievements of a compensatory nature insignificant."

He says it would involve a complete re-casting of our whole fiscal system, and adds, "£400,000,000 would not cover it." That is the estimate of a man well qualified to give an opinion on the subject. We have also the estimate of Mr. James, President of the Plymouth Licensed Victuallers' Protection Society. He estimated that the worst, and, consequently, the cheaper, half of the licences in this country could be bought for £70,000,000, which would make the value of the whole about £200,000,000. I find that the average of these four valuations is £250,000,000. Of course, it is not contended that all licences will be bought up. The Government speak of buying up a certain number, and it is certain that all the money they allocate for the purpose would be entirely insufficient to make any impression whatever on the licences. Consequently £350,000 would merely be a beginning. They would be compelled to resort to fresh taxation, and we should, therefore, have fastened round our necks an amount like a new National Debt. The temperance question would then be left in a great deal worse position than it is in at present. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board spoke of some temperance meetings which had passed resolutions in favour of this Bill; but he did not allude to the meetings that had passed resolutions against the Bill, although he must have had sheaves of resolutions sent to him in opposition to it. Have those whom this Bill will benefit, the brewers and publicans, called a single public meeting? No such thing. I believe no public meeting of any kind has been called in any part of the country in favour of the Bill. Although the Government appear as if they would like to defy public opinion, they cannot defy it permanently. It is of little use to say to the Committee that this Bill is an unjust or impolitic Bill, but I have no doubt it will stay in the recollection of the public whether it is passed or not. The electors are much alive to this question, and when they have the opportunity of placing their views on record, the Government will discover that public opinion is as much opposed to them on this question as it possibly can be.

(11.46.) MR. CONYBEARE: Right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite have expatiated on the poverty and the woes of the unfortunate publican whose case they are popularly supposed to be championing. But they have not tackled the point which has been put to them from both sides of the House. It has been clearly demonstrated that the lion's share of the amount voted will go not into the pockets of the publicans, but into those of the great brewers and distillers and the shareholders in great brewery companies. I should like to see any hon. Member on the other side of the House, who is not himself either a brewer or distiller or a shareholder in a brewery company, get up and urge that those classes are entitled to derive any benefit from this system of compensation out of the public purse. They know perfectly well that any such attempt would be received with indignation by the people of this country, and they, therefore, take good care to avoid the subject, and confine themselves to flaunting in our faces the piteous tale of the desperate condition of the unfortunate publican, knowing all the time that it is a sham and a humbug. Assuming the position of the publican to be pitiable, how do Members opposite answer the argument that the publicans in 99 cases out of 100 are weekly servants of the brewers and are constantly being compelled to relinquish their means of livelihood at the dictation of the owners of the tied houses without a farthing of compensation? The publicans are not entitled to any compensation. They are the holders of a monopoly under which, without the exercise of brains, and without any considerable capital, it is possible for them to amass vast fortunes not out of the wants and necessities, but out of the degradation and misery, of their fellow-countrymen. Wherever monopolies have been attacked and extinguished—whether you take the salt monopolies in Queen Elizabeth's time, or the tobacco monopolies in other times—you will find that compensation has never even been asked for. This monopoly differs in no whit from those to which I have referred because it extends not for a period of 14 years, but for 12 months. It has been taken by the publican with the full knowledge that the licence is to be held for a year and no longer. Therefore, to come down to this House and pretend you are interfering with vested interests and are inflicting hardship on these men for which they need compensation, is the merest fraud and sham. Let us deal out the same measure of justice or liberality or generosity to these men as is dealt out to others of a similar class. These men hold their licences for one year certain, and may, therefore, be considered as tenants for one year. If you will look through the annals of landlordism in this country you will find the landlords deal out very hard measure indeed to their yearly tenants and think nothing of turning them out at very short notice. I should like to know what compensation is given to the publican who has been, perhaps, boycotted out of his livelihood by the Primrose Dames. It is well-known that in such cases no idea of compensation is ever thought of by the landlords, and yet I venture to say such men are a thousand times more entitled to compensation than the publicans would be under any conceivable circumstances. Let us clear away all this cant and humbug. and deal with these yearly tenants on the same principle as that on which all you landlords deal with your yearly tenants. If you once introduce the thin end of the wedge of compensation to publicans, I should like to know where it is to end. There are plenty of other classes who will be able to establish on this basis a much stronger demand for compensation. Legislation has again and again been passed which has had the effect of ruining a large number of private individuals. Take the case of the private schoolmasters. An instance came under my notice a few days ago in my own constituency. An unfortunate man came to me and asked me for employment. He had been in a respectable position as a schoolmaster, but, by the operation of the Education Act, he had been deprived of his employment, and for years past had been compelled to take other employment, and, this failing him, had eventually been obliged to beg his way from house to house. There is a piteous case for you! What sort of compensation do the Government propose for relieving the miseries of the hundreds and thousands of unfortunate men of that description? None at all. This is a measure of jobbery and robbery—of robbery because it proposes to rob the whole of the public for the benefit of the publicans; of jobbery because the Government know perfectly well it is the price they have to pay for the support of the publicans.

(11.58.) Mr. CAINE: I beg, Sir, to move that you do report Progress.

Mr. Llewellyn rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but the Chairman withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

BARRACKS BILL.—(No. 234.)

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

INLAND REVENUE REGULATION (RE-COMMITTED) BILL.—(No. 255.)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

*(12.1.) The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson, Leeds, N.): I do not know whether it is of any use making an appeal to hon. Members opposite, but may I say that this is merely a Consolidation Bill, that it meets with general concurrence in the House, and it has passed Committee. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green has given notice of two Amendments; but I think he will be satisfied with the explanation I can give him. I am quite aware that 12 o'clock has struck, but I do not think there is any objection to the Bill on its merits.

(12.1.) Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) I would gladly support the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman if the Government would act reasonably, but they will not. I have a most admirable Bill before the House, a Bill which meets the general wishes of every part of the House; it has even the support of the hon. Member for South Tyrone——

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Committee deferred till to-morrow.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACTS (AMENDMENT) BILL.—(No. 284.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

*The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie. Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I hope I may be permitted to say that this Bill is introduced with a view to remove considerable defect in procedure under the Housing of the Working Classes Act; and a further Bill consolidates the law applying to England, Scotland, and Ireland. If the House will agree to the Second Reading we propose to refer the Bill to a Grand Committee where the details will be fully considered.

Objection taken; Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

ALDERSHOT ROADS BILL.—(No. 298.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: On a point of Order, Sir, I wish to ask why it is that this Order is marked in italics "to be referred to a Select Committee?" What do right hon. Gentlemen know of that? It is a matter for the House to determine, and I think it is an illegitimate and objectionable mode of trying to induce the House to pass the Second Reading.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): The explanation is that the Bill is of a semi-private character.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The examiners have reported that the Standing Orders which

Mr. T. M. Healy

govern Private Bills are applicable to this Bill, and so it must be referred to a Select Committee.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: The notice was not down yesterday.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The Examiner had not then reported.

Second Reading deferred till to-morrow.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 167.)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

*Sir J. LUBBOCK (London University): On the last occasion when this Bill was mentioned a wish was expressed that it should be extended to Ireland. I stated that I feared this was impossible, but that if it were possible I would gladly do so. I find, however, that this cannot be done. I hope the Committee may now be taken.

Objection taken.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (PROCEDURE) BILL.—(No. 245.)

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committe report Progress; to sit again upon Thursday next.

MOTIONS.

ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACTS (CHRIST'S HOSPITAL, WEBB'S CHARITY).

*(12.10.) Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): Under the Endowed Schools Acts of 1869 a scheme for the re-organisation of Christ's Hospital has been laid on the Table of the House since the 8th ult., and to a part of this scheme I have to ask the House to express dissent. I will occupy but a short time in showing why I ask the House to pass

this Resolution. The question is not one into which Party politics enter. In the district of Shoreditch I represent, and in parts of the parish outside my constituency, there is a very strong feeling on the subject, wholly irrespective of political opinions. In 1661 money was left by will by Thomas Webb, and of this will I hold in my hand a copy made by the Vestry Clerk of Shoreditch. In this will the testator says :—

> "I give and bequeath certain lands in the parish of St. Leonard Shoreditch to the President and Governors of Christ's Hospital and their successors for ever to the intent that the said President and Governors shall keep out of the profits and rents three poor children born in the parish of St. Leonard to be from time to time nominated and recommended by the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor of that parish. And to the further interest and purpose that after the expiration of the said under-leases when the rents and profits of the premises will prove of greater value than they are now the said President and Governors of the Hospital shall for ever afterwards maintain and keep out of the said rents and profits six poor children at least born in the parish of St. Leonard Shoreditch."

This was in 1661, and in the years from that time to 1790, the funds from the charity came to a very small sum, sufficient to support three children. In 1789 certain leases fell in, and in 1790 application was made to Lord Chancellor Thurlow and a degree given by which the number of children was increased to six, the income of the charity having increased to £130, and the cost of keeping each boy being £19 4s. 6d., so that the cost of the children was within a small sum of the total amount of the charity. Lord Chancellor Thurlow, after giving the decree gave as an *obiter dictum* that when the funds of the charity would allow of it, application should be made for a still further increase. In 1850 leases fell in again, and the annual income of the charity increased from £130 to £1,300, and the number of inhabitants in the parish concerned had multiplied by 10 during the interval of time, so that the size of the charity and the number of population had grown together. The cost of each child at Christ's Hospital is at this moment £50, so that the children together cost £300. [Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND expressed dissent]. Well, whatever the cost may be, it is considerably less than the £1,300 a year the charity now amounts to. There has been a re-organisation of the funds of Christ's Hospital, and the proposed scheme now lies on the Table of the House, and to this my Resolution refers. I want to call the special attention of the House to the fact that, in the quotation from the will of Thomas Webb, it is provided that if the rents and profits of the property increased, as Thomas Webb expected they would increase, provision should be made for six poor children at least. Now, if the fund—now £1,300—had been provided for the expense of the maintenance of six poor children, it might be urged that the residue should belong to Christ's Hospital, and not to the parish of St. Leonard; but the words "at least" and the *obiter dictum*, indicating the opinion in the mind of Lord Thurlow, show—and the same impression will be created in the mind of anyone reading the terms of the bequest—that the meaning is that the smallest number of children to be maintained is six, and that it might be a larger number. Now, the parish of Shoreditch does not ask that the whole of the £1,300 should be appropriated for the benefit of the parish; but they recognise that if six children were allowed by Lord Thurlow, when the income of the fund was £130, and the cost of maintenance £20 each child; now that the income of the fund is 10 times that amount and the needs of the parish 10 times as great, it is rather hard that, in the re-organisation scheme for Christ's Hospital, no attention should be paid to the words "at least" in the will. This is the more hard under the circumstances, inasmuch as Christ's Hospital is a large and wealthy Corporation, and the parish from which this fund is derived is one of the poorest parishes in London. I perfectly admit there may be property belonging to a wealthy Corporation upon which the parish in which the property is situated may have no claim. I admit there may be distinct and terminable claims of a parish upon such a fund; but I say the character of the bequest we are dealing with goes beyond a terminable claim, and leaves open the claims of the parish to re-consideration when the fund has reached 10 times its original value. The claims of the parish have been brought forward in a Petition from the Vestry in which members of all parties and denominations have joined. These claims have been urged for many years, and there is a very strong and widespread feeling that the parish has been dealt with unfairly in this Christ's Hospital scheme. The claim is not in any sense for the whole of the fund; but I do say that it is a fair thing to ask that they shall have the maintenance of a larger number than six children; that the claim founded on the change of circumstances which have increased fund and parish tenfold should be recognised. All we ask is, that the scheme shall be referred back to the Commissioners for amendment before it receives the Assent of Her Most Gracious Majesty, that some concession shall be made in the direction I now represent. There has unfortunately been too much of a tendency in these schemes of the Charity Commissioners to divert funds from the benefit of the poor. This is an instance, and I am not at all sure that the whole of the scheme is not open to the same charge. There are objections to the main scheme for Christ's Hospital, but I refrain from bringing up the whole question. I limit myself to the matter which is the subject of my present Motion affecting my constituents in one of the poorest parishes in London. I know that the scheme, which I will not for a moment venture to discuss now under this Resolution, does transfer funds to the maintenance of boarding schools out of London and divert funds from the Metropolis; and I do not know whether Metropolitan Members may combine against these proposals at a later period; but I urge now the unfairness of neglecting the claims of one of the poorest localities in London in favour of a wealthy Corporation, and I earnestly hope the House will support me in what I hope I have established as a good claim.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to withhold her consent from the scheme of the Charity Commission now before the House for the administration of the foundation commonly called Christ's Hospital, until due regard had been had to the claims of the parish of St. Leonard, Shoreditch, for an increased share of the endowment known as Webb's Charity."—(*Mr. James Stuart.*)

*(12.25.) MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): My remarks shall be brief, and I apologise to the House for intruding upon their attention at this late hour, but the importance of the subject justifies me in seconding the Motion of my hon. Friend. I contend that the Charity Commissioners in this scheme have not had due regard to the interests of the people of Shoreditch, and have, in fact, violated the Instructions contained in the Endowed Schools Amendment Act. I hope the House will not be alarmed at the appearance of this cumbersome volume, as my reference to it shall be but brief. In the Act, it is distinctly stated "That it shall be the duty of the Commissioners in every scheme abolishing or modifying the privileges or educational advantages to which a particular class of persons are entitled, or inhabitants of a particular area, or otherwise, to have due regard to the educational interests of such class." Now, I say, that in framing this scheme, the Commissioners have not had due regard to the interests of the inhabitants of this particular area. It may be recollected that, three or four years ago, a Committee was appointed by the House to inquire into the course pursued by the Charity Commissioners in reference to the method in which they had dealt with endowments left for the benefit of the poor. That Committee sat for two Sessions, and collected a very considerable quantity of evidence, which was laid before the House, and, in due time, followed by a Report, from which I propose to quote a few short extracts. The Committee seem to have gathered from the evidence that the Charity Commissioners

had been somewhat lax in their method of dealing with endowments left for the benefit of the poor, and if they had not violated the provisions of the Amended Endowed Schools Act altogether, the Committee evidently had the impression that the Charity Commissioners had not paid due regard to the interests of people in particular localities, and this impression appears in the following passage in the Committee's Report:—"The Act provides that it shall be the duty of the Commissioners to have due regard to the educational interests of the class of persons prejudicially affected by the scheme. Schemes have been narrowed by judicial interpretation, and, therefore, they require to be strengthened." I contend that the Charity Commissioners, in framing this scheme, have disregarded this provision, and also the recommendation of the Committee which sat upstairs. If, therefore, the Charity Commissioners have not acted strictly in accordance with the Act of Parliament, and carried out the desires of the Committee upstairs, I think we have presented a very strong case in support of this Motion. I further propose to point out that what is proposed by this scheme will not remove the grievance of which the people of Shoreditch complain; and I hope that hon. Members will recognise that on the present occasion we are not merely representing Radical or Liberal electors, but that we are speaking in the name of the whole ratepayers of the district. This is not a Party question. Hon. Members on the other side are just as much interested, and many of them are just as anxious to safeguard the interest of the poor, as we on this side. What has been done in Shoreditch to remedy the grievances of which we complain? In the first place, the Local Authorities have several times urged on the Governors of Christ Hospital that there should be an increase in the number of children educated out of the funds provided by Webb's Charity, and their application has been invariably refused. The Charity Commissioners have been approached for leave to apply to the Court of Chancery to increase the number of children, in the same way as was done in the case of the charity to which my Colleague has referred. In that case it will be remembered Lord Chancellor Thurlow increased the number of children from three to six, and if it was right for the parishioners or the Local Authority to apply to the Court of Chancery at that time, surely the Charity Commissioners must have an exceedingly weak case when they persistently refuse to allow a similar application to be made when Webb's Charity has so largely increased in funds. I think, under any circumstances, in fairness to the people of this poor district, they ought to have allowed the appeal to be made to the Court of Chancery, but, as it happens in every instance, the Commissioners, like the Governors of Christ's Hospital, have rejected the prayer of the Memorials presented to them. A few days ago a public meeting was convened in Shoreditch on this subject. It was called upon a requisition signed by 30 Liberals and 30 Conservatives. I think the inhabitants of Shoreditch acted wisely in taking this question out of the region of Party politics. Some gentlemen on the other side of the House, who take a clerical view of endowments generally, may be interested to learn that the Vicar of Shoreditch and the whole of the Clergy resident there joined in the requisition, and many took part in the meeting to which I have referred. Then I have here Petitions which have been prepared hastily—in two or three days—but which have been signed by no fewer than 3,044 adult residents of Shoreditch. No Sunday school children have been allowed to append their signatures to the Petitions. They are as *bonâ fide* an expression of opinion as were ever presented to the House. The Conservative Association has worked heartily, and co-operated with the Liberals, in getting signatures to the Petitions, so that I think I have justified my statement that this is not a Liberal or Radical question, but that it is one in which the entire people of the ancient Borough of Shoreditch are concerned. Now, what is it the Petitioners desire? They consider that the number of children to be benefited by the Charity should be increased from six to 25. That is not an excessive demand, when it is remembered that the income of this Charity has risen from £130 to £1,300 a year. I think we may take it that each child costs £50 a year, although perhaps that amount will be lessened under the scheme prepared by the Charity Commissioners, because the scholarships to be devoted to girls —of which there are three—will involve an outlay of less than £50 each. But taking the general cost at £50 only, £300 of the income of the Charity will be thus expended on Shoreditch children, and the Charity Commissioners propose to take away the remaining £1,000 from the inhabitants of this poor district and use it for the general purposes of their new scheme. The people of Shoreditch regard this is an act of spoliation and robbery on the part of the Charity Commissioners. I think we have a reasonable ground for claiming that this endowment, which was left for the inhabitants of Shoreditch, shall be applied for the benefit of the children of the district, and that if this £1,000 is not to be used for the education of Shoreditch children, it certainly should be devoted to some other purpose advantageous to the welfare of the locality. I hope that the House, notwithstanding the appeal which, I understand, will be addressed to it from some Members on these Benches to reject my proposal, will see that it has been made in a spirit of equity and justice and fair play. Shoreditch is one of the poorest districts in the Metropolis, and I hope the House will agree to the Resolution which we have submitted to it.

*(12.37.) THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): I have no complaint to make of this matter having been brought before the House, nor of the speeches of the hon. Members who have spoken upon it; but before I proceed further I should like to express my sincere regret that the hon. Members, who urge the adoption of this Amendment, are somewhat in a difficulty. They have stated that they have no wish to destroy this scheme as a whole, but that they are only appealing for justice for the particular district which they represent. But here comes the difficulty: This scheme has arrived at a stage at which

it cannot be amended, according to the procedure of the Act, and though it might be possible to excise from it entirely that portion which relates to Shoreditch, the result of so doing would, unfortunately, be to leave those whom the hon. Member for Shoreditch represents in a worse position than they will be under the scheme. It has been suggested that this scheme inflicts serious injury on the poor. I do not deny that the best inheritance of the poor is a good education, but I suggest it is an astonishing and monstrous proposition that by this scheme the poor are unjustly deprived of that inheritance. What has happened during many years? Many attempts have been made to deal with this foundation; appeals have been made by the Corporation of the City of London and the Governors of Christ's Hospital to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The scheme has been amended in the direction ordered by the Judicial Committee, and as it now stands it represents an enormous sacrifice of patronage and privilege on the part of the Governors of the Charity for the sake of the education of the poorer classes. Therefore, the assertion that the scheme in any way detracts from the interest of the poor is entirely contrary to the fact. With regard to the scheme itself, the hon. Member who introduced this Motion has given an accurate description of the Trust up to a certain point, and therefore I need not follow him in that part of his speech. At this moment, the income of the Charity provides something like £1,196 per year. In 1852 the Governors of Christ's Hospital took special pains to find out their legal position. With regard to a proposal to increase the number of children provided for under the Trust, they obtained legal opinions, and were advised that they had no power to add to the number of the children. They appealed to more than one high legal authority, and the view which I have described was confirmed by the opinion of the present Lord Selborne. The Governors of Christ's Hospital are not bound in any way to maintain more than six children out of the funds of this Charity. It seems impossible to frame any scheme which will not give rise to some sense of grievance. The Charity Commissioners are bound to adhere to the conditions of the Act under which the schemes are framed. Their policy has been to observe the restrictions which they found laid down as to the number of children to be on the foundation, and if they had adopted any other policy it would have been impossible to frame any scheme at all. As it is, it has taken several years to mature the scheme. It is proposed that 179 children for Public Elementary Schools shall be placed on the foundation subject to the reservation as to the 49 that now enjoy the privilege. The hon. Member urges that Shoreditch has been left out in the cold; but the reply to that is that Shoreditch will enjoy the benefit of the scheme as a whole in common with the rest of the Metropolis. So far as I understand, the Commissioners had no choice whatever with regard to this matter. They have been obliged to act on certain lines. They have not only acted in accordance with the scope and intentions of the Act, but they have also been guided by the Report of the Schools Inquiry Commission and the Reports of subsequent Commissioners, who were in favour of removing the restrictions upon the use of educational endowments. The Report of a Committee in this House which sat in 1887 says—

> "The Committee think that the general policy of the Commissioners should be to remove and not to retain such restrictions as may be calculated to limit the use of the endowments."

I concede there is a strong feeling on the part of the constituencies of hon. Members of all shades of political opinion in regard to this matter. No man could be more anxious than I should be, if possible, to remove the difficulty in which the hon. Member is placed. I can only say that the scheme is for the benefit of the children of the poor in the Metropolis, because, at present, the children who are placed upon the foundation need not be Londoners at all, but may be drawn from all parts of the country. The essence of the new scheme is that the benefits shall be secured for the people of London generally. Before I sit down, I hope to be able to show that this scheme holds out a splendid educational prospect. It proposes that a large number of places in the Hospital shall be retained for children from public elementary schools. It affords a day school for 600 boys, and a night school for 400 girls. This surely is a splendid prospect for the poor of the Metropolis. There must, of course, be grievances in such a great scheme; but, looking at the vast interests involved, I do hope that the House will support the scheme as now framed, and will reject the Motion of the hon. Member.

(12.50.) MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I wish I could vote for the Motion, if for no other reason than that its adoption would have the effect of throwing out a scheme which I am afraid will prevent us utilising these funds in the most desirable manner. To my mind, the class most in need of educational assistance is the upper poor and the middle class. But I know it is not proper for me to attempt to argue this question on the present Motion. If my hon. Friend asked me to vote for his Motion on the ground which he stated, I am bound to say that I think the arguments adduced by the right hon. Gentleman who has just resumed his seat appear to be absolutely conclusive, for he points out that the Commissioners have in this matter acted entirely on the lines of the Statute which governs their proceedings, and that they have also acted in conformity with the recommendations of the Schools Inquiry Commission, and of a Committee of this House. It would be most undesirable now to revive the system which the Act of 1869 put an end to. No doubt it is reasonable for the people of Shoreditch to feel aggrieved. Certainly, my hon. Friend has taken a proper course in this matter; but I venture to say that the House would set a dangerous precedent if they adopted the Motion, for they would immediately stimulate small localities to set up claims adverse to the general interests of the whole community. On this ground I am afraid I must vote against the Motion of my hon. Friend.

(12.55.) MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge): As one of the Governors of the Charity, I wish to say that we have taken a great deal of trouble with regard to this case. No doubt the Webb bequest provides for the education of six children only. We have taken counsels' opinion, and we have been advised that we have no power at all to increase that number.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): By whom were you so advised?

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND: By the late Lord Chancellor. The result of the adoption of this Motion will be to throw the whole of the scheme back for perhaps another 12 years. We have been long trying to frame this scheme in a manner which will give general satisfaction; and I think it would be a great pity if now the House were to adopt a Resolution which would practically render futile our labour for the past 12 years. While sympathising with the hon. Member for Shoreditch I appeal to the House to pass the scheme, which has been approved by the Charity Commissioners.

(12.58.) MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): I quite agree that my hon. Friend the Member for Shoreditch has taken a proper course in this matter; but I must ask the House for a minute or two just to consider something of the history of this scheme. It has been before the Charity Commissioners for the last 12 or 14 years, and it has been delayed by vested interests of the most extraordinary character. Claims of a complex and complicated character have been put forward, and scheme after scheme has been completed and destroyed, until those who took an interest in the question began to regard as almost hopeless the task of framing a satisfactory scheme. At last, however, the House has before it a scheme which deals with the largest sum with which the Charity Commissioners have ever had to deal, namely, a sum of £60,000 a year. Through the delay which has taken place no fewer than 3,000 children have been deprived of the education of a lifetime, and you will continue to deprive these children of this education, if you adopt the Motion of my hon. Friend. The Commissioners have to deal with all the parishes on the same principle, and if they admit the special claim of the people of Shoreditch they will have to go into the claims of other parishes, and the whole scheme must be taken to be at an end. I sincerely trust that the House will pass this scheme, and I may add that I should regard it almost as a national calamity if it should fail.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport): I wish to ask whether, in the event of this Motion being either carried or lost, it will be open to me to bring forward on a future occasion a Motion praying Her Majesty to refuse her assent to the scheme, not on this point only, but on general grounds?

*MR. SPEAKER: Yes; I think it will be competent to the hon. Member to raise on another occasion an objection to the whole scheme. The present objection turns upon a special point, namely, the alleged grievance of Shoreditch.

(1.10.) The House divided:—Ayes 87; Noes 115.—(Div. List, No. 132.)

BOILER EXPLOSIONS ACT (1882) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Sir William Houldsworth, Bill to amend "The Boiler Explosions Act, 1882," ordered to be brought in by Sir William Houldsworth, Sir Henry Roscoe, and Mr. James Maclean.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 339.]

It being after One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

House adjourned at a quarter
after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 13th May, 1890.

WORKING CLASSES DWELLINGS BILL.—(No. 107.)

Read 2ª (according to order) and committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD DELAY.

QUESTION—OBSERVATIONS.

*EARL SPENCER, in rising to call attention to the delay in the action of the Local Government Board after an inquiry made by one of their Inspectors on 21st September, 1889, at East Heddon, Northamptonshire; and to ask when replies will be given (1) to an application made on 20th January, 1890, from the Brixworth Sanitary Authority for sanction to a loan for water supply in East Haddon; (2) to a complaint made on 4th March, 1890, by Mr. Albert Pell, as to alleged default of the Sanitary Authority, said: My Lords, this matter is one in which I feel a very great interest, and I will in a few words explain the circumstances which make it necessary for me to ask the question which I have put upon the Paper. Last August, unfortunately, in a village close to where I live in Northamptonshire, a very violent outbreak of diphtheria took place and a good many lives were lost. Your Lordships will understand how severe the outbreak was when I say that out of a population of something like 500, within three months, from 26 to 30 deaths occurred. The Local Government Board heard of this, and on the 21st September they commenced an inquiry by one of their Inspectors into the cause of the outbreak. The Inspector stayed there a fortnight and made the most minute inquiries into the matter. The Rural Sanitary Authority were somewhat divided in opinion as to how best to meet this terrible outbreak, but by a majority they did come to a resolution in favour of draining the parish. When this inquiry, however, took place they found themselves unable to carry out the resolution. There was a considerable minority opposed to the plan of the majority, and the minority made use of the delay, and I cannot blame them for that. The inquiry, which, as I have said, was commenced on the 21st September, lasted about a fortnight, but the Report was not received until the 7th December. That, my Lords, was, I think, a very grave delay in face of the desperate state of things in the village. I endeavoured to expedite the Local Government Board; but, as I say, the Report only arrived on the 7th December, no interim Report having been made, as I think there might well have been in the circumstances. No doubt the Report was very elaborate, covering many sheets of paper, and the last excuse made was that it was delayed in consequence of having to be, printed. But what I maintain is that we ought to have had in the face of circumstances such as I have stated some short account of what the Report was to be, in order that the Local Authority might act promptly upon it, whereas by the delay they were prevented from doing anything. The very fact of this Report being expected paralysed the action of the Local Authority. That is the first matter to which I wish to refer, and I should not have referred to it here, but for a repetition of the same delay in the subsequent proceedings. The Rural Sanitary Authority determined to give a water supply to the village, and application was made to the Local Government Board for the necessary authority to obtain a loan for carrying out the project and erecting the new water-works. That application was made on the 20th January. Your Lordships will see how very important it was far the village to get promptly a new water-supply, for I believe there is nothing more likely to cause an outbreak of diphtheria than a bad water-supply. But time went on, and considerable correspondence took place between the Local Government Board and the Local Authority, all of which, as far as I can see, might have been got over in a few days, and to this day we have not had an answer—at least on the 10th June we had received no answer whatever to that application. The consequence was that from the 20th January when we applied until the beginning of June no action could possibly be taken for supplying this place with water. But that is not all. A well-known gentleman, formerly Member of Parliament, Mr. Albert Pell, who took a very strong view as to the action of the Sanitary Authority, wrote to the Local Government Board, to ask whether the Rural Sanitary Authority had not been at fault in the matter. He made that application on the 4th March. On the 1st May the Local Government Board officer went down to make inquiry both as to the water supply, and as to the question asked by Mr. Pell as to whether the Rural Sanitary Authority were not in fault. We have heard no more of the matter; down to the 12th June the Board have never received an answer. My Lords, I think this is a very serious matter. The lives of the people in the village were practically in jeopardy, and the remedy was to carry out drainage works and to get a new water supply. There would have been plenty of time between February and now to get the requisite water supply. If the plan proposed was a good one it might have been carried out, or if it was a bad one a better might have been put forward; but, instead of that, the action of the Local Authority has been paralysed, and nothing can be done pending the inquiry of the Local Government Board. Now, what makes this matter more serious is that after those lives were unfortunately lost last autumn—there were close upon 30 deaths—within the last two weeks a fresh outbreak of diphtheria has taken place, and I have received a telegram from the vicar this afternoon stating that three lives have been lost from the outbreak. This is attributed by many to the bad condition of water. This, I think your Lordships will agree, is a very serious matter, and I wish, therefore, to call the attention of Her Majesty's Government to it. I am well aware of the great ability of the Permanent Staff in the Local Government Department; I have always found the greatest possible attention paid to any representation I have made to them; but I believe they are entirely overworked; that the amount of business they have now makes it absolutely impossible for them to answer inquiries with the promptitude which is demanded. In a case of this sort where life depends upon the result of the action of the Local Government Board, and where, at all events, the action of the Local Authorities is impeded until the Local Government Board inquiry is completed, it is of the greatest consequence that there should not be this enormous delay, but that the greatest promptitude should be shown by the Department. All I can say is that, unless some change takes place, it only points to one thing—that the sooner the Local Government Board give up their functions and hand them over to the County Councils the better for the country. I have thought it right to give the House this full explanation of the matter, for I think it urgently demands the attention of Her Majesty's Government, and I venture now to ask the question of which I have given notice.

*LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY: My Lords, I wish to supplement what the noble Earl has said by adding a few words. I wish to ask him why, having put down this notice on the Paper as to the complaint of Mr. Albert Pell in regard to the alleged default of the Local Sanitary Authorities, he has not stated what that alleged default is. But, my Lords, the Local Sanitary Authority have been to blame. In 1885 the Chairman of the Sanitary Authority published a statement as to the evil effects which had happened in East Haddon from overcrowding and insanitary state of the cottages, resulting in the breaking out of disease. Their overcrowded condition had caused an inquiry to be held by a sub-Committee of the Local Sanitary Authority as much as three years before. In 1885 I went myself to the Brixworth Union, and I found that a number of the houses in East Haddon ought to have been condemned. Here is the Report made by the Local Board's officer—Dr. Bruce Low—and he says that instead of employing proper Inspectors and a proper medical officer they every now and then had an inquiry by a subcommittee, which was not as effective, not having the experience and knowledge required. This Report says that the Medical Officer of Health is appointed for the whole area, comprising about 60,000 acres, and a population of about 13,000 inhabitants. He receives a salary of £5 per annum, and he is under no obligation to make inspections at all unless he receives notice from the Sanitary Authority, and for the Reports he then makes he receives a guinea. They cut down everything to the lowest possible figure, and I think your Lordships will agree it is impossible to get good work out of a man for £5 a year. The default has been owing to the Chairman of the Board of Guardians and the Sanitary Authority, who, instead of putting the law and the Nuisance Inspector in motion, wrote a complaint in the *Fortnightly Review* in 1885 putting the blame of these insanitary cottages in East Haddon on the neighbouring county gentlemen. Since the Report of the sub-committee of the Brixworth Sanitary Authority, about three years before 1885, on an outbreak of fever in East Haddon, nothing has been done to improve or suppress the bad cottages, and it appears, from the Report of the Local Government Inspector of November last, that these overcrowded unsanitary cottages are still there. I think the noble Earl is himself partly responsible for what has happened, because he is a neighbour and the patron of the rector of Harlestone, and he could surely have put some pressure upon him to see that he did his duty in this matter. According to the view of the Rector of Harlestone, the noble Earl is to blame as one of the 13 country gentlemen who reside within sight of East Haddon, and none of whom attended the Board of Guardians or the Sanitary Commissioners. Now, my Lords, this Report of the Local Government Board Inspector of November last states that all these cottages in East Haddon, which were complained of by the Chairman of the Board of Guardians, and which I myself saw were unfit to be put in habitation, were all in the same state five years after he wrote his article in the *Fortnightly Review*, and after the Local Government Board sent down Dr. Parsons in 1885 to inspect. Part of this evil of diptheria does not arise so much from the water supply as from the frightful state of the village privies and cesspools, which are not emptied more than once in two years, instead of once in every six months. We have a state of thing existing in the village which it is impossible should not lead to diphtheria and other illnesses. Then the noble Earl has not suggested where the water-supply is to come from. East Haddon is on a height, and if a water-supply is attainable, it would be impossible to get it up there without force-pumps. But, my Lords, if, in the meantime, these recommendations of the Report had been followed out, which the Chairman of the Sanitary Authority ought to have seen were carried out, a great deal of mischief would have been avoided. I think it right to make this explanation in consequence of the discussion which took place five years before without result. I must mention another thing, and that is, that though East Haddon is full of diphtheria, there do not appear to be any cases in the village of Holdenby, owned by Lord Clifden, which was built under the direction of the noble Earl, nor in the village of Brampton, which is owned by the noble Earl, whose cottages are more like villas than ordinary cottages.

*THE PAYMASTER GENERAL (The Earl of JERSEY): My Lords, I do not propose to follow my noble Friend who has just spoken in his remarks, or rather his attacks, upon the manner in which the Brixworth Union has carried out its duties, because that is not exactly the question which has been asked me, though it would seem from the Report of the Inspector that there are certain matters which might be improved with regard to East Haddon, which is under the control of the Sanitary Authority of that Union. I am not surprised that my noble Friend Earl Spencer has spoken somewhat warmly, because anyone who is aware of the amount of illness that has occurred at East Haddon will agree that the cause of illness should be grappled with at once. There has been no neglect on the part of the Local Government Board. It is true, as has been pointed out, that the attention of the Local Government Board was directed to this outbreak on the 30th August last by a paragraph which appeared in the newspapers. They at once wrote to the Sanitary Authority to make inquiries, and the result was that they sent down an inspector on the 21st September to report upon the matter. He furnished his Report on the 5th October. That Report was sent down to the Sanitary Authority on the 6th December; but the delay which elapsed between the time of the furnishing of the Inspector's Report and the issuing of the Report was due, as I am informed, to its rather voluminous nature and to the necessity of its being printed. Then the question which the noble Earl asks me refers to certain letters which were written on the 20th January and the 4th March. On the 20th January the Brixworth Sanitary Authority applied to the Local Government Board for a loan in order to carry out the necessary works for obtaining a water supply to East Haddon. The Board replied at once and asked for particulars. On February 19th, the Board received a plan from the Sanitary Authority, but further particulars were required, and before those particulars were furnished to them, on March 5th, they received a letter from Mr. Pell. The Board, therefore, thought it better to have one inspection, instead of having two separate inspections, in the same village. But they were unable to proceed at once in regard to Mr. Pell's letter, because, having received intimation of a charge against the Sanitary Authority, they were bound to communicate that charge to that Authority, which they did. They did not receive an answer from the Sanitary Authority until the 7th April. The Board then directed an inquiry to be made on both the points, both as to the water supply and the sewerage. That inquiry was held on the 1st May. After that inquiry was begun, revised estimates had to be made, and those were not received by the Board until the 13th May. The Report is a very difficult one for the Board to come to a decision upon; first of all, on account of the difficulty of supplying the water, because, as has been pointed out, the water would have to be brought down the hill half a mile, and then pumped up again into the village. It also appears that a settlement has not yet been made with regard to the private rights of the owners of the water. Then the question of the sewerage is also a very difficult one, because the position of East Haddon is such that any sewerage scheme would require to provide for no less than four outfalls in order that the sewage might be treated at those outfalls, and as the village only contains about 500 inhabitants the Board had to consider a great deal before authorising so great an expense as those works would entail to be incurred. But I am able to tell the noble Earl that, in the course of two or three days, replies will be received on both those points. It is only fair to the Board to point out that it is Impossible to hold the inspections at the moment they are asked for, because there is only a limited number of Inspectors; and the Board are also bound to consider most carefully any questions involving an outlay of the ratepayers' money. I certainly hope that East Haddon will not be the scene of any such unfortunate outbreak of disease as the last, and that any remedy which may be carried out will prove successful.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I have listened with great attention to the noble Lord's explanation, and I think, although, no doubt, he has stated all that the Local Government Board have told him, it is really no defence at all. It appears from his own statement that the Report was received from the Inspector on the 5th October, and that no answer was sent to the Local Authority until the 7th December. I am bound to say that seems to me a proceeding which is incapable of being defended in any way whatever—in the case of a serious outbreak of diphtheria in a village to take two months before the complete Report is made. Although I confess that I have always myself received the greatest courtesy in communicating with the Local Government Board, I must say this is a case of the grossest delay. With regard to the second point, I can myself quite see that to carry out a scheme for a better water-supply in a village situated as we are told East Haddon is, is a very difficult matter; but, at the same time, it appears that the inquiry was held early in May. We are now at 14th June, and the noble Earl tells us that nothing has yet been done, though we are told on behalf of the Department that in two or three days, in consequence, I suppose, of my noble Friend's question, a communication will be made to the Rural Sanitary Authority. This is a very serious matter indeed. It is a question not merely of the existence of such an evil, but a danger to life. What confidence can there be felt in a Government Department if its business is conducted in this manner? Knowing, as I do, a great deal about the Local Government Board, and that the gentlemen who carry it on are exceedingly efficient, I think my noble Friend's explanation, that the Board is under-manned, must be the true one; but, at the same time, I must say that experience teaches me that unless very strong pressure is put upon an Office, no matter what Department it may be, you will find that the regular course of routine will be gone through. It is therefore necessary that strong pressure should be applied where rapidity of action is required, and that the greatest care should be taken that the matter does not go on in the ordinary jog-trot course. Wherever rapidity is necessary pressure can be put on, and in such a case as this it ought to have been put on. I must say that being Chairman of a Board of Guardians, I have myself been constantly in communication with the Local Government Board, and I find that they frequently are a great deal longer in answering letters than is necessary, though I find I can always get an answer by return of post if I write a note privately to the head of the Department. But then I ask myself what has the Department been doing all the time if in the interval an answer comes promptly to me by return of post from the head of it. I can only suppose that the officials will not move out of the ordinary course. And if that is so in my own case what may it be in others, because having done a great deal of business with the Local Government Board I suppose they would naturally pay me greater attention than others might receive. There are grievous complaints of the enormous time Government Departments take in answering letters, and those complaints are often extremely well founded. I would, therefore, press upon the noble Earl either that the Local Government Board should be given extra assistance, or that some pressure should be put upon them when necessary, so that they may act with greater rapidity and with the promptitude which the public has the right to expect from a Government Department.

*The Earl of JERSEY: With regard to the delay in the Report, I have pointed out that the revised estimates were not received until the 13th May, and it could not therefore have been sent earlier.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: They ought to have been.

*The Earl of JERSEY: However, I shall be glad to inform the Local Government Board of the remarks which have been made by the noble Earl.

House adjourned at Five o'clock,
to Monday next, a quarter
before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 13th June, 1890.

BANKRUPTCY.

Copy ordered—

"Of Statement showing the percentage of Gross Assets realised to Assets as estimated by Debtors in cases closed by Official Receivers and Non-Official Trustees respectively, in the year 1889."—(*Sir Michael Hicks Beach.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 222.)

SMALL HOLDINGS.

Report from the Select Committee brought up, and read.

Minutes of Proceedings to be printed. (No. 223.)

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 223.)

BARRACKS CONSOLIDATED FUND.

Committee to consider of authorising the charge on, and out of, the Consolidated Fund of any deficiency which there may be in the monies provided by Parliament for the payment of the principal and interest of any sums borrowed by the Treasury, under the provisions of any Act of the present Session for building and enlarging barracks and camps in the United Kingdom, and in certain Colonies (Queen's recommendation signified) upon Monday next.

NEW WRIT.

For Donegal County (Northern Division), *v.* James Edward O'Doherty, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA CONSTITUTION BILL.—(No. 256.)

Lords Message, requesting a Copy of the Report, &c., from the Select Committee on the Western Australia Constitution Bill considered.

Ordered, "That a Printed Copy be communicated."

QUESTIONS.

IRELAND—NEWRY UNION.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the amount due for poors' rate in the Union of Newry by the immediate lessors in respect of holdings valued under £4 5s.?

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Local Government Board are informed by the Clerk of the Newry Union that the recoverable amount due by immediate lessors of holdings valued at or under £4 is only a few shillings, and that every exertion is being made by the Guardians to get in before the 1st July all the arrears of rates due.

THE NATIONAL TEACHERS ACT.

MR. JORDAN (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to a correspondence between the Secretary (A. Anderson) to the Association of National Teachers in the Union of Enniskillen, Ireland, and the Local Government Board, dated 26th and 30th May last, in reference to a rate of the Board of Guardians of the Enniskillen Union of the 25th March last, purporting to rescind a resolution of the 7th February, 1882, whereby the Union was made contributory under "The National Teachers Act, 1875;" whether the allegation of the teachers is true, that the motion rescinding the resolution of the 7th February, 1882, and making the Union non-contributory, was carried illegally; whether the motion was carried by the vote of a Mr. Bennison, an *ex officio* Guardian, who when voting was disqualified; whether his vote was immediately challenged; whether his name has since been removed, by authority of the Local Government Board and the Board of Guardians, from the list of *ex officio* Guardians of the Enniskillen Union; whether the rate of the Guardians was challenged on the moment on another issue, namely, the vote of the presiding chairman, and a 14 days' notice of motion handed in to sustain the resolution of the 7th February, 1882; whether, before either of those issues were disposed of, the Local Government Board made their official notification to the Commissioners of National Education by omitting (see letter, 30th May) Enniskillen Union from the list of contributory Unions; whether, at the striking of the last rate in September, 1889, the Guardians estimated for the probable amount of result fees; whether the Local Government Board, by their letter of 30th May last, refuse to further interfere to assist the teachers of the Union to their results; and whether, considering the present position of the teachers, and all the circumstances of the case, he will request the Local Government Board to re-consider the whole matter with a view to continuing the Enniskillen Union contributory under the Act of 1875?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The facts appear to be substantially as stated in the first paragraph. It was contended that the motion was illegal, inasmuch as the chairman had declined to vote when his name was called, but had subsequently voted when the numbers had been declared on each side, but before a decision had been announced from the Chair. The Local Government Board laid the matter before their legal adviser, who advised that the facts were not such as to make the vote illegal or void. The resolution of the Guardians had not been questioned on any other ground than that of the action of the chairman up to the 2nd April, when the Local Government Board furnished the Commissioners of National Education with the list of contributory unions under the National School Teachers' Act, under one of the provisions of which the resolution had come into operation from the previous day. Some days afterwards a question was raised as to the qualification of a Mr. J. J. Bennison, and it appears that that gentleman, not having furnished particulars of his property in the Union, called for by the clerk of the Union, with a view to ascertain whether he possessed the requisite qualification for the office of *ex officio* Guardian, the clerk has removed his name from the list. The Local Government Board have no power to interfere further in the matter; but it is, of course, open to the Guardians to again become contributory next year, should a majority of the Board be then in favour of doing so.

LAND COMMISSION—BELFAST.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of fair rent appeals disposed of by the Chief Land Commission during its last sitting at Belfast; and in what number of cases were the rents fixed by the Sub-Commissioners confirmed, increased, and reduced respectively?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners report that there were 143 cases listed for the sitting of the Appeal Court in Belfast, on April 28, 1890. Of these, 20 were cross appeals, leaving 123 cases to be disposed of at the sitting, and that the list was disposed of as follows:—Withdrawn, settled, or struck out for non-appearance, 54; orders of Sub-Commissioners confirmed after hearing, 52; originating notices dismissed on legal grounds, five; rents raised, five; order of dismissal of originating notice reversed, one; adjourned at request of parties, four; remaining for judgment, two; total, 123.

POLICE AT PORTUMNA.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state by whose directions two members of the Royal Irish Constabulary follow the movements of Martin Fahy, of Sheenrush, Portumna, and John Morrissy, of Portumna, and pay nightly visits to their houses, where they remain for over a quarter of an hour, each time endeavouring to engage the inmates of the house in conversation, and on being questioned as to their business refuse to answer; on what charge were these two men arrested on the evening of the 9th of May last by two constables, who were under the influence of drink, and put in the lock-up until 3 o'clock next day, when they were brought before Mr. Tener, J.P., and, no charge being made against them, were ordered to be discharged, as there was neither a warrant or information against them; whether he will have an inquiry made into the conduct of the constables; and if any reparation will be made to Mr. Fahy and Mr. Morrissy for the injury done them?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that the men had been under supervision, there being reason to believe that they are engaged in illegal practices. In regard to the second paragraph of the question, I understand that an action has been brought against the police, and, therefore, it would not be proper that I should make any statement pending a judicial inquiry.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Is it open to the police to enter mens' houses when they are not asked to do so, because they are suspected of an inclination or intention to commit some offence?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not pretend to answer a legal question, but I do not gather from the question on the Paper that the police did that. There is no allegation that the police forced their way into any houses.

MR. SEXTON: Is this practice followed of keeping men practically in custody all night in order to relieve the authorities from the duty of making inquiry?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The authorities are not relieved from the duty of making inquiry. I believe that in regard to one of these men, John Morrissy, he was convicted of conspiracy in May, last year.

MR. SEXTON: For the protection of the public, will the right hon. Gentleman order that where the police are engaged in dogging the footsteps of particular individuals, a record shall be kept of the nature of the suspicions entertained against them, so that, if necessary, they may be referred to afterwards?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think that in all such cases it would be desirable to keep a public record.

*MR. ROCHE: Is it the fact that Morrissy was summoned for intimidating a man named James Mitchel, and that when Mitchel was produced by the Crown at the trial, he swore that he did not see Morrissy on the day of the alleged intimidation and did not know him at all, and consequently he could not have interfered with the man in any shape or form?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know that that is the fact; but if it is, it would be an important circumstance to bring forward in the action to which I have referred

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): Is it the intention of the Government to pay the costs of defending the action?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know that there will be an action.

IRISH PRISON WARDERS.

MR. CONYBEARE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he still enforces the rule that no warder in an Irish prison may go outside the walls without uniform; how long such order has been in force; whether he is aware that it entails great hardship upon the warders, who are thereby prevented from enjoying any recreation during the hours when they are off duty; whether it has come to his notice that the warders are at times attacked and insulted by roughs when they appear in the public streets in their uniform; and whether the same rule applies to the female warders, and, if not, why not?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The General Prisons Board report that the rule that no warder in an Irish prison may go outside the walls without uniform was originally made in February, 1879, and was renewed in April, 1889. The Prisons Board are not aware that it entails great hardship. The Board are not aware that the wearing of prison uniform is the cause of warders being attacked and insulted by roughs in the public streets. The rule does not apply to female warders, the uniform worn by them being merely a black dress.

MR. SEXTON: May I ask the Home Secretary if no English warder is allowed to go outside the prison unless he is in uniform?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I must ask the hon. Member to give notice of the question.

DERRY GAOL.

MR. CONYBEARE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state for each of the months since September last the number of Catholic prisoners confined in Derry Gaol and the terms for which they have been imprisoned; whether any Catholic clergyman has during that period been permitted to visit such prisoners; has any Catholic service been conducted in the prison chapel during that period; and whether he still refuses to sanction the appointment by the Bishop of the Diocese to the prison chaplaincy of such clergymen as the Bishop may see fit to nominate?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not had time, owing to the insufficiency of the notice, to ascertain the particulars, and must ask the hon. Member to postpone the Question.

THE STRIKES BILL.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the hon. Member for East Belfast (Mr. de Cobain) whether, in view of the disapproval of his Strikes Bill by the Belfast Trades' Council and other Public Bodies representative of industrial interests, he intends to proceed with the measure?

*MR. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.): In deference to the views expressed by the body to which the hon. Member's question refers, I do not intend taking any active steps for the further promotion of the measure this Session, and it is my intention to move at a future time that the Order be discharged.

IRISH PUBLIC WORKS LOANS ACT.

MR. SUMMERS (Huddersfield): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what advances have been made by the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland under the Public Works Loans (Tramways) (Ireland) Act of 1886?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): The amount of the advances made by the Commissioners under the Public Works Loans (Tramways) (Ireland) Act of 1886 is £189,600.

POLICE IN TIPPERARY.

MR. DILLON: I wish to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether it is true that a group of people who had assembled on Wednesday night in a square at New Tipperary, and lighted a bonfire to celebrate Mr. W. O'Brien's marriage, were charged and batoned by the police, and that the police extinguished the bonfire and carried away a flag which the party had with them; if so, on what ground was this gathering dispersed by the police?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My attention was this afternoon called to a paragraph which has appeared in a London morning paper, and I telegraphed to Dublin for information, but have not yet received a reply.

Mr. DILLON: I will repeat the question on Monday.

THE NAVAL AND MILITARY MANŒUVRES AT DOVER.

Mr. GOURLEY (Sunderland): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if he intends placing upon the Table of the House an Objective Memorandum of the recent combined Naval and Military Manœuvres at Dover; and whether he has seen a letter in the *Times* from General Sir Andrew Clarke, in which he designates the manœuvres as senseless, and calculated, if followed by actual war, to lead to bloodshed and disaster—

> "That vessels utterly unfitted for engaging in coast defence were permitted to remain for hours under a fire which would have annihilated them in 20 minutes, besides being engaged in other impracticable tactics."

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Lord G. Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing): The recent operations at Dover were designed by the Military Authorities, and the only part taken by the Admiralty was, at the request of the War Office, to direct the attendance of four of Her Majesty's ships on the occasion. I am, therefore, unable to lay before the House the "Objective Memorandum" referred to by the hon Member. No Official Report upon the manœuvres in question has yet been received by the Admiralty.

Mr. GOURLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many troops, Regular and Auxiliary, were engaged in the recent combined Military and Naval Manœuvres at Dover; the position, calibre, and number of guns engaged in defending the town and fortifications against the naval attack; and the object of the manœuvres?

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. E. Stanhope, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The object was to test, in a small degree, the working of a scheme of defence, and the conditions under which fire can be controlled and regulated according to recent orders. Practically, the garrison of Dover was employed in in the defence of that fortress against the troops at Shorncliffe, aided by a sea attack. Contingents of Militia and Volunteers took part in the operations. It would not be for the public interest that I should furnish particulars of the guns engaged.

H.M.S. *BARHAM.*

Mr. GOURLEY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether H.M.S. *Barham*, on her preliminary trial, with her engines working at only a moderate speed, and much below what she is expected to develop, even with natural draught, had to return to port owing to the dangerous vibration of her bearings, especially her thrust blocks; whether it is true that the hull is of steel, and the plates so thin, that difficulty was experienced in rivetting them; who is responsible for having designed and built this vessel without a double bottom, in consequence of which the engines are bolted right on to the thin skin of the ship; and what measures the Admiralty intend adopting to stiffen and make the vessel seaworthy?

Lord G. HAMILTON: The *Barham* and *Bellona* are experimental vessels, being practically torpedo gun-vessels on a large scale, with locomotive boilers, and built to attain a high speed on a limited displacement. The *Barham* made a preliminary trial on May 19th. This was her first trial under way. It was made for the purpose of giving contractors the opportunity of observing the working of the propelling machinery and making any necessary adjustments before proceeding to the official trial. This preliminary trial continued the whole day, the maximum power developed being about 3,000 horse-power, and the contract natural draught power being 3,500 horse-power. There was no dangerous vibration of the bearings to the main engines; in fact, they were practically rigid. The thrust block bearers moved slightly, indicating the desirability of stronger attachments to the hull proper. The work is now practically completed. The hull is built of steel, but no difficulty in riveting the plates has been experienced. The responsible designer of the *Barham* is Mr. W. H. White. No vessel of such small size as the *Barham* has been constructed with a double bottom; in fact, the arrangement is impracticable in association with such light draught and the due protection of the machinery. The engines are not bolted right on to the skin of the ship, but carried on exceptionally deep and strong girders. Beyond the additional fastenings to thrust bearers, no change in structure has been shown to be necessary so far as trials have gone.

FISHING GROUNDS IN THE THAMES ESTUARY.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, as owing to the deposit of London sewage in the vicinity of the Nore Sand the fishing grounds of the Thames Estuary are being injured, he will arrange for the station of a Government ship in the neighbourhood, in order that the sludge may be deposited according to agreement east of, and no higher up the river than, the Knock Buoy?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): No agreement such as is suggested by the hon. Member has come officially to my knowledge, and there seems some difficulty in taking any action in the matter until it has been under the consideration of the Committee of the recently created Kent and Essex Sea Fisheries District, who will have power to deal with it.

MAJOR RASCH: Arising out of that answer may I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he is aware that the sewage of the City of New York is taken 20 miles out to sea, and that a Government vessel is employed to see that it is not put upon the fishing grounds?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: This is not the United States.

WILD BIRDS PREVENTION ACT.

SIR HUSSEY VIVIAN (Swansea, District): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been drawn to an account which appeared in the *Daily Graphic* of an infringement of the Wild Birds Preservation Act, perpetrated on or about the 24th May on the Island of Grassholme, on the Coast of Pembrokeshire, by certain persons belonging to a steamer called the *Sir Richard Fletcher*, employed by the War Department as a submarine miners' steamer, in which it is stated that gannets and other sea birds were shot by persons on board the steamer, and that

Lord G. Hamilton

"six young men landed and, with the boat's crew, dispersed over the island and began shooting puffins and gulls."

The correspondent further says—

"The gannet eyries were empty, and as I sat by I saw above me the sailors hunting out the puffins from their holes and killing them with sticks, while three men in the costume and with the accent of gentlemen were wandering along the edge of the eyrie, taking the eggs of the gannet from every nest, a bird which only lays one egg; not only so, but one man was taking egg after egg, not with any purpose of preservation, but simply flinging them, as fast as he could gather them, over the cliff, to smash on the rocks below. When, after *Sir Richard Fletcher* had sailed, I visited the gannets' quarters' I found that of 200 nests within reach only two retained their eggs";

whether he will cause inquiries to be made as to the persons by whom these infractions of the law were perpetrated; and whether, if no power exists to punish them by military law, he will cause prosecutions to be instituted against them?

MR. E. STANHOPE: The whole question put by the hon. Member was answered yesterday, and I have nothing to add. There is no intention on the part of Her Majesty's Government to prosecute any persons in respect of what has been done.

SIR H. VIVIAN: I submit that the question was not answered yesterday. I want to know by whom this infringement of the Act was perpetrated; or rather, by whose instructions; and whether no power exists under military law to punish the offenders. If there is power, will he cause a prosecution to be instituted?

MR. E. STANHOPE: I stated that there has been an inquiry into the facts. It is not known who the persons were, and I explained why it was not intended to prosecute.

SIR H. VIVIAN: Will the right hon. Gentlemen furnish the names of the persons who landed, in order that they may be prosecuted if evidence against them can be obtained?

MR. E. STANHOPE: I will consider that question.

TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION WITH AUSTRALIA.

SIR G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any definite proposal has been recently brought to the notice of the Colonial Office for duplicating telegraphic communication with Australia by means of a cable connecting with the African system, and calling at Mauritius; and whether Her Majesty's Government will view with favour such alternative communication as being of great commercial and strategic value?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): The answer to the first portion of my hon. Friend's question is in the negative. In reply to the latter portion, I may say that Her Majesty's Government would be glad to see such a line of telegraphic communication established.

PORT LOUIS AS A COALING STATION.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any consideration has been given to the following observations by the Governor of Mauritius, in Colonial Report No. 88, pages 4 and 5, relative to Port Louis as a coaling station:—

> "If in time of war the Suez Canal should be closed, the safety of the long sea route to India will turn not only on the strength of the British Navy, but on the coaling stations at the Cape of Good Hope and Mauritius; I regret to report that nothing practical has been accomplished as regards another element of Imperial defence, that of communication by telegraph between England and Mauritius. I found no difficulty in inducing the Council of Government to vote a subsidy of £10,000 per annum for this object, on condition that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would obtain a similar Vote from the House of Commons, as the total estimated yearly cost was £20,000. I understand the Eastern Telegraph Company are prepared to lay down the line whenever the remaining moiety is provided by the Imperial Government;"

and whether Her Majesty's Government are prepared to take any action thereon?

BARON H. DE WORMS: Parliament having just voted a contribution to the cost of a British Mail Service to Mauritius, which Her Majesty's Government consider more important than the establishment of telegraphic communication, it is not proposed to ask for a subsidy for the latter purpose.

GRIEVANCES OF TELEGRAPH CLERKS.

EARL COMPTON (York, W.R. Barnsley): I beg to ask the Postmaster General what decision has been arrived at by the Departmental Committee appointed to inquire into the grievances of the telegraph clerks?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University): The Departmental Committee appointed by me in March, and to which I referred several of the questions subsequently raised in this House by the noble Lord, have taken various, and, I understand, voluminous, evidence upon these points. They have just presented their Report to the Secretary, from whom I expect to receive it in a few days, together with his observations thereon. It will be necessary for me, as soon as I have formed my own conclusions upon it, to submit them to the Treasury. No time shall be lost in dealing with the matter, and I hope to be able to announce the decision of the Government at no distant date. One important change relating to sick pay was carried into effect on June 1, and all *employés* of my Department are now reaping the benefit it confers.

TELEGRAPHIC CONFERENCE.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the fact that a proposal has been made to the International Telegraphic Conference, now sitting in Paris, for a reduction to 1s. or 1f. of the fee for signalling shipping intelligence both from British and Continental semaphores; and whether, in view of the commercial utility of the proposed change, the Government will use their influence in support of the adoption of the proposal?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): A representative of Lloyds' has been admitted to the Conference in order to represent the utility of a reduction of the signalling fee, and the British Delegates will support it.

NEWTON COLLIERIES, CAMBUSLANG.

MR. PHILIPPS (Lanark, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the medical officer at Newton Collieries, Cambuslang, was appointed by the masters, though he is paid entirely by the men; that a large number of the miners have expressed a wish for a change in the medical officer, but that the officials of the colliery refuse to entertain the idea of a change or to allow a ballot to be taken on this question; and whether he will consider the advisability of introducing a Bill to provide that men who pay for their own medical officer should be able to choose him themselves?

MR. MATTHEWS: The Secretary of State has no power to interfere in the matter.

MALTESE MARRIAGES.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthen, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is true that a Protestant soldier stationed at Malta, where thousands of British Protestant soldiers are now stationed, cannot be legally married to a native in that Island without first taking an oath to bring up his children in the Roman Catholic faith, even when the Roman Catholic native is willing to have the marriage celebrated without such a condition?

MR. E. STANHOPE: I have no official knowledge on the subject. The marriage in Malta of a Roman Catholic is not valid unless the ceremony be performed by a Catholic priest, who may very probably decline to act without the oath or declaration referred to in the question. There has been no recent change in the law as regards mixed marriages.

THE CROFTERS' ACT.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether, having regard to the permanency of holding conferred upon the crofter in Scotland by "The Crofters' Act, 1886," such crofters fail to be entered on the valuation roll in terms of "The Valuation of Lands (Scotland) Act, 1854," and particularly of Section 6 thereof, as proprietors?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Bute): I think not, Sir.

TURKEY AND EGYPT.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is the fact, as was very recently stated in the French Chamber that negotiations are now proceeding between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the Sultan of Turkey on the subject of Egypt; and if such negotiations are proceeding, whether he will state to what points they are directed?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: On the 23rd of April the Turkish Ambassador informed the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that the Sultan desired to renew negotiations with respect to the British occupation of Egypt, and communicated a draft Convention on the subject. A reply was given, to which the Porte has not as yet addressed itself. The House is aware of the utmost terms upon which Her Majesty's Government were able to treat in the Convention negotiated by Sir H. Drummond Wolff.

MR. BRYCE: Can the right hon. Gentleman tell the House what the terms of that reply are, and when he will be prepared to lay it upon the Table of the House?

SIR J. FERGUSSON: The hon. Member knows that that would be a very unusual course; and, as the Porte has not yet replied, it would be impossible for me to fix any date.

PLEURO-PNEUMONIA.

COLONEL BLUNDELL (Lancashire, S.W., Ince): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether the Agricultural Department is aware that pleuro-pneumonia has brokon out in the districts of Wigan, Pemberton, and Newton, Lancashire; whether, in the four cases which have occurred, the cattle have been bought from the same firm of cattle dealers; and whether the Inspector was taken to only one of several farms belonging to the firm of cattle dealers in question?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Yes, Sir; I am aware that there have, unfortunately, been outbreaks of pleuro-pneumonia in the districts of Wigan and Newton, but we have received no Returns from Pemberton. In the case of five recent outbreaks in the neighbourhood of Wigan and Warrington, it has been ascertained by an Inspector of the Board that the diseased animals were bought of a local dealer named Bennett, of Padgate, who has professed his inability to give any information as to the origin of the cattle. I have no information as to whether the Inspector was taken to only one of several farms belonging to the firm referred to in the question.

THE ZAMBESI.

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the delimitation of our sphere of influence south of the Zambesi, which was proclaimed by the High Commissioner of South Africa in November, 1888, is included in the questions now being discussed at Berlin?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: It has already been stated that our sphere of influence was not defined, but only roughly indicated towards the North-West; and this, as well as all other unsettled delimitations are under discussion. I must decline to enter into particulars.

THE RESIGNATION OF MR. MONRO.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what are the points in which difference of opinion between himself and the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police has led to the resignation of the latter?

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that question, perhaps he will state whether it is true that for the office of Assistant Commissioner, vacated by the death of Colonel Pearson, Mr. Monro submitted the name of Chief Constable Howard, a police officer of great experience, and that the right hon. gentleman nominated his own private secretary, Mr. Ruggles Brise, who has had no police, military, or legal experience at all.

*MR. MATTHEWS: With the permission of the House I will read the Commissioner's letter—

"Secretary of State.

"The result of our interview yesterday has been to convince me that I can no longer with propriety continue to hold the appointment of Commissioner of Police. The views which I entertain as to the justice and reasonableness of the claims of the Metropolitan Police in connection with superannuation being unfortunately on vital points diametrically opposed to those of the Secretary of State, I cannot for reasons given in my Memorandum of the 5th inst., accept the Bill as adequately meeting such just and reasonable claims. It is, therefore, unfair both to the Government and to myself that I should be placed in the position of having to support a Bill with reference to which I find myself in opposition to the views of the Secretary of State, and in sympathy with what I conceive to be the just claims of the members of the Metropolitan Police Force. For many months I have found myself surrounded with difficulties in attempting to procure recognition of what seem to me to be the fair requirements and demands of police service in connection with other important matters. My views as to police administration, unfortunately, differ in many important respects from those held by the Secretary of State, and I have received clear indications that the duties of the successor of Colonel Pearson are to be intrusted to a gentleman who, however estimable personally, has no police, military, or legal training. I have no wish whatever to trench on the authority and prerogative of the Secretary of State, and, under such circumstances, I feel it only right to place my resignation of the appointment which I have the honour to hold in your hands. I hereby do so, and shall be ready at once to make over charge to any officer who, on my resignation being accepted, may be appointed to succeed me.

"June 10." "J. MONRO.

With regard to the question of patronage, I informed Mr. Monro that I could not regard that as a ground for his resignation, inasmuch as I had formed no decision on the subject, and had expressed none. As to differences of view in regard to police administration, I told him I should hope those were capable of being reasonably adjusted. But, looking at the attitude which Mr. Monro considered he was bound to take up with regard to my views on the subject of superannuation, and at the whole tenour of the letter I have read, I felt I had no alternative but to accept his resignation. The Government Superannuation Bill will be in the hands of Members in a few days, and it will be for the House to judge of the proposals it contains. It will be found to make what the Government consider reasonable, and even liberal, provision for the Metropolitan as well as for the provincial police. It goes as far as any former proposed legislation; and, in particular, it will give to the Metropolitan Police a right to pension after 25 years' service, irrespective of age, and without medical certificate. I regret extremely that the Commissioner should have considered our proposals inadequate; but we have felt that the interests of ratepayers and the general pension arrangements of the Public Service had to be considered as well as the desires of the police. In answer to the question of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green, I have to inform him that I have not rejected the name of Chief Constable Howard. On the contrary, I propose to appoint him to the post.

Mr. J. STUART: Will the right hon. Gentleman lay upon the Table the Memorandum referred to before the discussion of the Bill comes on?

Sir W. HARCOURT (Derby): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that question, I wish to say that this is a matter of such grave importance that I would ask him whether he will give an early opportunity to the House of having this statement before us that we may discuss it. I would venture to suggest that the proper course to take in the matter would be to fix a day for taking the Police Vote in Committee of Supply. There is still much Supply to be taken, and if the Police Vote were placed first, there would be an opportunity afforded for the statement, which I am sure the Government is as desirous to make as the House is to receive. I only venture to make that suggestion on account of the extreme gravity of the differences of opinion between the Home Secretary and Scotland Yard.

Mr. MATTHEWS: The suggestion seems to me eminently reasonable, and I hope that the First Lord of the Treasury will be able to accept it and to fix an early date for the discussion of this subject.

Sir W. HARCOURT: There is another question which I forgot to ask. The other night, when we were discussing the question of police superannuation, I understood, from a remark of the President of the Local Government Board, that the Police Superannuation Bill would be in the hands of the House before we came to the discussion of Clause 4 of the Local Taxation Bill.

Mr. MATTHEWS: I have every reason to hope that the Police Superannuation Bill will be circulated by Monday. With regard to the Memorandum mentioned by the hon. Member (Mr. J. Stuart), it contains comments and suggestions of alterations in the clauses of the Bill which the Commissioner had confidentially to communicate, and I do not, therefore, think that the document is one which could properly be laid on the Table of the House.

Mr. C. GRAHAM: May I ask whether, in order to avoid these frequent changes in the office of Chief Commissioner, and the differences of opinion which cannot conduce to the safety of the Metropolis, the right hon. Gentleman will advise Her Majesty's Government as to the expediency of placing the management of the police in the hands of the London County Council?

Mr. MATTHEWS: Differences of opinion would be more likely to arise if the London County Council had the control of the Metropolitan Police.

Mr. C. GRAHAM: That has nothing to do with my question. I did not ask whether the London County Council would be more likely to agree with the Chief Commissioner than the Secretary of State, but whether, with a view to securing the safety of the Metropolis, he will consider the propriety of placing the management of the police in the hands of the London County Council?

HOME ACCOUNTS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India if he can give the House detailed particulars respecting the undermentioned items in the Home Accounts of the Government of India, of which no particulars appear in Paliamentary Paper, No. 171, 9th of May, 1890:—The persons to whom payments were made, the amounts paid in each instance, and the reason for making such payments of compassionate allowances, £2,457 14s. 6d. (page 9); like information respecting compassionate and miscellaneous pensions, £4,987 7s. 6d., and gratuities £585 (page 11); like information respecting gratuities granted on retirement to members of the Uncovenanted Services of India, £2,057 2s. 1d. (page 11), and the circumstances under which the following charges were incurred: "Cost of stores lost in transit in India," £7,808 4s. 1d. (page 13), showing through default stores to this amount were lost; and whether the stores were insured?

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Sir J. Gorst, Chatham): If the hon. Gentleman will move for the information, it will be given as an unopposed Return.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I will move for it on Monday.

FORTROSE ACADEMY.

MR. CALDWELL: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the old Academy at Fortrose, which it is proposed to rebuild on another site, is to be under the management of the School Board of Rosemarkie as a higher public school; and whether, by the existing law, School Boards are entitled to build higher public schools at the expense of the ratepayers?

MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: No resolution has been passed to raise the Fortrose Academy to the *status* of a Higher Class Public School, and we are not aware that there is any intention of altering the present *status*. In view of this, the point raised in the second part of the hon. Member's question does not arise.

THE TRANSCASPIAN PROVINCES.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Foreign Office has received any special Report on the new proposals of the Russian Government for the State colonisation of certain Transcaspian Provinces; and, if not, whether such a Report could be procured and laid before Parliament?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: No such Report has been received; but inquiry on the subject will be made of Her Majesty's Embassy at St. Petersburg.

BRITISH GUIANA.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give any further information as to the reported attacks on the mining settlement at Bartica, on the Essequebo, in British Guiana; and whether he has yet received any Report on that occurrence from Colonel the Hon. R. Cotton, the Chief of the Police?

*BARON H. DE WORMS: There has been no attack on the settlement at Bartica, but Colonel Cotton's Report, received by the last mail, states that a rumour reached the Government that a party of 70 armed Venezuelans had entered British territory; and that a party of 14 boat's hands and police, under the command of a general, who stated that he was an Inspector of Rivers appointed by the Venezuelan Government, and described as "half-naked savages," appeared before the penal settlement at Massaruni and were promptly disarmed by the Stipendiary Magistrate. The Government are taking every precaution to prevent the violation of colonial territory.

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 4) BILL.

MR. CONYBEARE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade in which newspapers and under what dates was the Schedule of Rates contained in the Pier and Harbour Provisional Order (No. 4) Bill published as required by Section 9 of the General Pier and Harbour Act of 1861?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The section of the Act of 1861 named in the hon. Member's question was repealed in 1862 by the Pier and Harbour Act Amendment Act. The requirements of the last-mentioned Act, both as to advertisement and deposit of the Draft Order, were duly complied with in the case of the application for the Scilly Pier Order. The advertisement appeared in the *London Gazette* of 26th November, and in the *Cornishman* of 7th and 14th of the same month, and the Draft Order in full was deposited for inspection at the Custom Houses of Scilly, Penzance, and Falmouth.

BOY MESSENGERS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MR. CONYBEARE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that, in connection with the service of the Press in this House, a number of young boys are employed by the Boy Messenger Company; that these boys (about 13 years of age) have to be on duty from 12 o'clock mid-day till whatever hour the House sits, with only one half-hour off duty for tea; that on a recent occasion, when the House sat till 2 or 3 o'clock a.m., one lad of 13, who had been on duty since the previous mid-day with only one-half hour for tea at 6 o'clock, had to go into the City with Press messages before he could leave work; and whether he is prepared to introduce legislation to protect these young lads from being compelled to work such long hours?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed that the ordinary hours of attendance of these boys do not exceed the limits prescribed by the Factory Acts, though, of course, these boys do not come within the scope of those Acts. They may occasionally work overtime; but I have had no facts before me to show that legislation is necessary.

Mr. CONYBEARE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that one of these boys was working from 12 o'clock at noon until 3 o'clock in the morning?

Mr. MATTHEWS: I am not aware of that fact.

Mr. CONYBEARE: He told me so himself.

NEW MAGAZINE RIFLE.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the opinion of the Admiralty Ordnance Authorities was taken before the adoption of the new magazine rifle by the Army; whether their opinion was favourable; and when it is expected by the Admiralty that the same arm will be in use in the Navy?

Lord G. HAMILTON: The opinion of the Admiralty was taken before the adoption of the new magazine rifle for the Army. On the whole, the opinion of the Naval Authorities was favourable. The Admiralty do not propose to introduce this rifle into the Navy until next year.

TREASURE TROVE IN MERIONETHSHIRE.

Mr. KENYON (Denbigh, &c.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the discovery of certain pieces of ancient plate in Merionethshire, on Crown lands; whether the Crown has taken any action as to their custody; who is the proper custodian; and whether this discovery does not lead to the proposals which have been suggested for a National Museum for Wales?

*Mr. JACKSON: My attention has been called to the discovery referred to, and the Treasury Solicitor is in communication with the Chief Constable of Merionethshire with reference to the Crown's claim if the articles discovered prove to be treasure trove. I understand that the chalice and paten discovered are in the possession of Mr. Robert Griffith, of Dolgelly, to whom notice was given that they are claimed as treasure trove, and that he will be held responsible if he parts with the possession of them to any person on any claim hostile to that of the Crown. I am not aware of any proposals for a National Museum for Wales.

"MITCHELL *V.* REGINA."

Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if it is true certain official letters between the suppliant in "Mitchell *v.* Regina, Deputy Adjutant General, R.E., War Office," on the subject of his claim for compensation under the Queen's Warrant, and prior to the suppliant's retirement in 1857, has been withheld from the Law Officers of the Crown, and also suppressed from the demurrer and plea filed in the High Courts of Justice; whether it is true that, on the 4th June, a notice was served on the suppliant in "Mitchell *v.* Regina" by the agent of the War Office to pay the costs of the Crown in the Court of Appeal, and what is the amount; and whether it is true it is intended to make charges against the suppliant for the fees of the Attorney General and Solicitor General at the trial in Court of Appeal on the 12th May?

Mr. E. STANHOPE: All letters and papers in the War Office which bore on Colonel Mitchell's case were placed at the disposal of the counsel who conducted it. It has been already stated in this House that the claim for the costs of the Crown will not, as an act of grace, be enforced against Colonel Mitchell.

Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I have also to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has received an official letter, dated 15th May, from the suppliant in "Mitchell *v.* Regina," in which he complains that in consequence of the action of the War Office his home in England has been broken up, and his family driven to the Continent for economy's sake, that he has for many weeks been indebted to a gentleman for permission to occupy an attic in his house at a low charge, and for many weeks past has avoided, as far as possible, public places, not having decent clothes to wear nor money to buy others; whether it is true that this official letter was never submitted to him, but was replied to on the day after it had been received by a subordinate officer; and whether a letter of that nature should by

Departmental rule have been submitted to a higher branch of the War Office presided over by Mr. Cave?

MR. E. STANHOPE: Such a letter would be rightly replied to by Mr. Cave, and I accept fully the responsibility for the answer sent. Whether the letter itself was submitted to me or not is a question of office administration, which I decline to answer.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Attorney General if it is the case that the suggestion to compromise the case of "Mitchell *v.* Regina" was made to the suppliant prior to the trial in the Court of Queen's Bench of 4th February, and that the suppliant responded in the affirmative; whether a second suggestion to compromise was made subsequent to the trial, and the suppliant again responded in the affirmative; and whether it is true that no substantial offer has yet been made to the suppliant?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I must respectfully decline to answer the hon. Member's question. Any communications which passed between myself and the counsel for General Mitchell were strictly confidential. The question is framed under a complete mis-apprehension.

POSTMEN'S MEETINGS.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he could inform the House how long the Rule prohibiting postmen from attending public meetings has been in force?

*MR. RAIKES: There is no Rule prohibiting postmen from attending public meetings. In March, 1866, Lord Stanley of Alderley, who was then Postmaster General, made a Regulation (which has been placed on the Table of this House during the present Session on the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Glamorganshire) requiring meetings of postmen convened for the consideration of official questions to be held in post office buildings, and subject, consequently, to the permission in each case of the authorities. This Rule was relaxed by my Order on April 19, 1890, and postmen are now free to hold such meetings anywhere, and without asking permission from the Department, if they comply with the Regulations, which I have more than once stated in this House.

MR. CONYBEARE: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Rules of the Service under which he has recently punished the postmen for attending a meeting on Clerkenwell Green, and state when and by whom those Rules were framed?

The following Questions upon the same subject were also upon the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for the Camborne Division:—To ask the Postmaster General whether he will state how many hours per diem the several classes of Post Office *employés* are required to work, and whether, if any postmen take part in a meeting after the hours of their own particular work, they are still liable to punishment, on the ground that the meeting is taking place during the working hours of the Service generally? To ask the Postmaster General whether, in view of the extreme discontent prevailing amongst the Post Office *employés*, he will consider the advisability of instituting a full inquiry into their grievances, and whether, pending the result of such inquiry, he will re-instate the men he has recently punished? and to ask the Postmaster General whether he is correctly reported to have stated that the postmen are at liberty to attend meetings either indoors or out of doors, provided they conform to the Rules of the Service, and that one of such Rules is that they should prevent any outsider from attending such meetings; whether he can state what measures the men ought to adopt to prevent an outsider attending one of their open-air meetings, and whether the presence of a Member of Parliament would constitute such a breach of the Post Office Rules as would justify the recent rigorous punishment of the men?

*MR. RAIKES: I propose to answer the whole of these questions together. There is no Code defining the measure of punishment to be inflicted for insubordination and defiance of Rules. This is a question which the Postmaster General has to decide for himself upon each case according to its merits. I may add, at the same time, that it has been to me a matter of unfeigned regret that any postmen should have allowed themselves to be so misled as to make punishment necessary; but I am sure that the general body of postmen will see that they have left me no alternative but to vindicate the authority of the Department. Generally speaking, the duties of a Post Office servant occupy him for eight hours out of the 24. Postmen render themselves liable to punishment, because they take part in a meeting without complying with the prescribed conditions, not because the meeting is held at a time when some other postmen are at work. A Departmental Committee has, for some time, been engaged in inquiring into alleged grievances in one large department of the Post Office, and I have recently received deputations from other branches of the Service, whose representations I am, with my official advisers, now carefully considering. As regards the men under suspension, they will be restored to duty as soon as they have given satisfactory assurances for their future good behaviour. I am correctly reported to have stated that the postmen are at liberty to attend meetings either indoors or out of doors, provided they conform to the Rules of the Service, and that one of such Rules is that they should exclude any outsider from attending such meetings. Open-air meetings scarcely seem to be the best adapted for reasonable deliberation and discussion of official questions, but those who hold them must be responsible for the observance of the Rule to which the hon. Member refers, and I think that I have a right to expect that Members of this House will not incite public servants to breaches of the Rules under which their Department is administered.

MR. CONYBEARE: In reference to the answer of the right hon. Gentleman to the last question, is it not the fact that postmen, as a rule, are not in the receipt of very high wages, and that it would not always be possible for them to hire a hall for the discussion of their grievances? Is that not a sufficient ground for permitting them to meet in the open air? May I also ask what measures the men ought to adopt to prevent an outsider from attending one of their open-air meetings, if the presence of a stranger is to expose them to punishment? Would not the enforcement of that Rule practically abrogate their right of meeting in the open air?

Mr. Raikes

*MR. RAIKES: I am not prepared to say that the Committee might not have some difficulty in excluding some enthusiastic sympathisers. I have not said that there is a Rule against open-air meetings, although I have pointed out their disadvantages.

EARL COMPTON: The right hon. Gentleman has expressed his regret that the postmen should have allowed themselves to be misled. By whom were they misled and in what manner?

*MR. RAIKES: I am afraid that it would take a long time to answer that question. [*Cries of* "Go on" *from the Opposition Benches.*] The individual who signed the notices and made himself responsible for the statements contained in them is not a member of the Postal Service at all, but was largely connected with the organisation of the dock strike in the winter.

MR. CONYBEARE: The right hon. Gentleman spoke of Members of this House inciting the Post Office officials. Will he be kind enough to state on what occasion any Member of this House incited Post Office officials to any breach of the Rules of the Service? Are we to understand that if the Post Office *employés* invited any hon. Member to attend one of their meetings, he is precluded from accepting such an invitation for fear of exposing the men to punishment.

*MR. RAIKES: I hope the hon. Member will not deem me discourteous if I say that I have nothing to add to my former answer.

MR. CONYBEARE: I will repeat the question upon some other day.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): Is it correct that two months ago, when postmen desired to be addressed at one of the meetings by Members of Parliament, they were given to understand that Members of Parliament could not attend?

*MR. RAIKES: I do not remember the occasion, but if the hon. Member wishes I will make inquiry.

MR. CONYBEARE: Is it the fact that the postmen at the Western District Post Office have declined to do the duties of the men who were suspended for attending a Trade Union Meeting; and whether the duties have only been taken up under threats from their superior officers?

*MR. RAIKES: There is no foundation for the statement implied in the question that the postmen at the Western District Office have declined to do the duties of the men who have been suspended, or have taken up those duties only under threats from their superior officers.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether telegraph messenger boys are being employed to do the duties of the postmen at the Western District Post Office who were suspended for attending a Trade Union meeting; and whether he considers that the important duties of experienced men may, with safety to the public, be entrusted to these lads?

*MR. RAIKES: The work of four out of the seven men who have been superseded is being done by telegraph messengers, from whom the postmen's class is recruited. Any duties temporarily vacant are, as a matter of course, supplied for in this way.

MR. CONYBEARE: Is it the fact that several thousand letters which should have been sent last night from the East Central Office to the district offices for delivery by the 7.15 p.m. dispatch were not sent off at all that night; whether the congestion of work has been overtaken; and whether it is possible to settle the difficulties between the suspended postmen and the Postal Authorities in such a way as not to endanger the proper carrying on of the postal work?

*MR. RAIKES: No, Sir; there is no foundation whatever for any of the statements contained in these questions. I am happy to inform the hon. Member that there was neither delay of letters nor congestion of work last night. As regards difficulties, I am not aware of any.

SPURIOUS JUBILEE SHILLINGS.

MR. KELLY (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that a shilling piece, recently issued by the Mint, has erroneously been supposed to be spurious, and to have been coined in Germany; whether, in addition to the shilling piece known as the Jubilee shilling, another has since been issued from the Mint in which the representation of the head of Her Majesty the Queen is much larger than that issued in 1887; whether, in the shilling pieces recently issued by the Mint, there is no space between the representation of the head of Her Majesty and the rim, whereas on that issued in 1887 there is a considerable space; and, whether the statements published in the newspapers recently to the effect that the shilling piece without any space between the representation of the head of Her Majesty the Queen and the rim of the coin are spurious, and have been manufactured in Germany, and are only of the value of 7½d. are wholly mistaken and erroneous?

MR. GOSCHEN: Yes; I am aware that there has been such an impression, but the statements mentioned by the hon. Member are quite unfounded. In 1889 a slight change was made in what is known as the Jubilee shilling, the head of Her Majesty being slightly enlarged. There is less space, therefore, on this coin between the head of Her Majesty and the rim than there was on the original Jubilee shilling, but the newspaper statements that coins of this description are spurious are entirely mistaken.

BONDING AND BLENDING WHISKY.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Committee on Bonding and Blending Whisky will be appointed?

MR. GOSCHEN: I have been considering the terms of the Reference to be made to this Committee, and, without pledging myself to the exact language, I may say that the terms will be generally as follows:—

> "That a Committee be appointed to consider the question whether, on grounds of public health, it is desirable that certain classes of spirits, British and foreign, should be kept in bond for a definite period of time before they pass into consumption, and to inquire into the system of blending British and foreign spirits in or out of bond, and as to the propriety of applying the Sale of Foods and Drugs Act and the Merchandise Marks Act to foreign spirits and mixtures of British and foreign spirits."

I may also add that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Leeds, whose scientific and economical attainments particularly qualify him for presiding over such an inquiry, has consented to take the place of Chairman, if this should be the will of the Committee.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: The terms of the Reference are exceedingly satisfactory.

ORDNANCE SURVEY STAFF.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he can now give the figures as to the increased pay of Ordnance Survey Staff?

Mr. CHAPLIN: They will be given if the hon. Member will move for them.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I will do so on Monday, if that will not be too soon.

Mr. CHAPLIN: No; that will do.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. SEXTON: I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury how soon the House is likely to get into Committee of Supply, and whether it will be necessary to hold another meeting of the Conservative Party?

*The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith, Strand, Westminster): I have nothing to add to what I said yesterday.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to Herring Fishery (Scotland) Act (1889) Amendment Bill, with Amendments: that they have passed a Bill, intituled "An Act to amend and consolidate the Acts relating to Industrial Schools in Great Britain." [Industrial Schools Bill] [Lords]; also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend and consolidate the Acts relating to the Reformatory Schools in Great Britain." [Reformatory Schools Bill] [Lords]; also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Summary Jurisdiction Act with respect to the punishment of Youthful Offenders." [Youthful Offenders Bill] [Lords].

MOTION.

WELSH INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION ACT (1889) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Sir Henry Hussey Vivian, Bill to amend "The Welsh Intermediate Education Act, 1889," ordered to be brought in by Sir Henry Hussey Vivian, Mr. Stuart Rendel, Mr. Warmington, and Mr. Arthur Williams.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 340.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

EDUCATION CODE (1890) [GRANT].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

COMMITTEE.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it is expedient to authorise an additional Special Grant, out of monies to be provided by Parliament, to certain Elementary Schools, in pursuance of any Act of the present Session for making operative certain Articles of the Education Code, 1890."

(4.32.) Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) I beg, Sir, to move that you do report Progress and ask leave to sit again, and I do so on the ground that we have had this notice put down as a first notice without any warning whatever. Yesterday the Government attached so little importance to the Resolution that it was put down 18th or 19th on the Notice Paper amongst the Government Orders of the Day; and Members who expected to be brought down here to-day to discuss the three great Government Bills embodying the three great principles of their policy — I refer to the Irish Land Purchase Bill, the Publicans' Endowment Bill, and the Tithe Bill—find, much to their surprise, that an unimportant Order is put down first without a note of warning from the Government. If we are to have an Autumn Session let it be because the time of the House is taken up with important subjects. To-day is Friday; Fridays are ordinarily private Members' days, but the Government have taken those days for their business on the plea that there are several important Bills which they must pass. Well, private Members to-day are deprived of the right of bringing on Motions on the Order for going into Committee of Supply; and having taken the day themselves, the Government have put down this small matter as a first Order instead of going on with the Taxation Bill. I protest against such a course, and I submit that if anything were wanted to show the utter collapse of the Government, we should find it in their action in regard to this Order. If the Government are in a difficulty with regard to the progress of business, it is due entirely to their want of management. Let them come to business. The Government having obtained the time of private Members, let them use it in a businesslike way. I move to report Progress.

(4.35.) THE CHAIRMAN: If the hon. and learned Gentleman had listened to the Resolution, he would have seen that it is a purely formal one. I must decline to put the Motion.

*(4.35.) MR. W. H. SMITH: I appeal to the hon. Member not to persist in his Motion. The Code has been accepted by the House, the Bill has been read a second time without any opposition, and this is merely a necessary formal stage before the Committee on the Code Bill is taken. It is most unusual for observations to be made on such a stage as this, or for any discussion to take place. There are further stages on which discussion and opposition, if necessary, can take place, and I do hope and believe that, however opposed hon. Members may be to Her Majesty's Government, they will allow this formal stage to be taken.

(4.36.) SIR W. HARCOURT: I think the hon. and learned Member is under a misapprehension. I entirely sympathise with the hon. Member in his objection, and assert the absolute right of the House to discuss the financial Resolution under the Code if it thinks fit to do so. The House has on many former occasions asserted its right to discussion at such stages, and I hope it will maintain that right. At the same time, there should be exceptional circumstances to justify resistance upon a merely formal financial Resolution; and as I agree that this is only a formal stage, I hope, in the circumstances, that the hon. Member will not press his Motion. The Code has received the approbation of a majority of the House, and will probably prove to be a valuable measure.

*(4.37.) MR. S. SMITH: I desire to ask the right hon. Baronet the Vice President of the Council a question. I have been informed by one of the largest School Boards of the Kingdom that a Circular has been issued by the Science and Art Department laying down the conditions of the grant for manual instruction; that those conditions are utterly impracticable; and that their effect will be to prevent the intentions of Parliament from being carried out. Amongst other things imposed, they lay down the absurd rule that manual training must be given altogether out of school hours.

SIR W. HART DYKE: No, no.

*MR. S. SMITH: I have been told so, and that the Education Department and the Science and Art Department do not co-operate together, the consequence being a muddle which will prevent the intentions of Parliament from being carried out. It is to be hoped that, after the House has unanimously agreed that manual training shall be incorporated in the school instruction, no frivolous red tape regulation will be laid down which will defeat the intentions of Parliament. I wish to have a word of explanation on this subject from the right hon. Baronet.

(4.40.) SIR W. HART DYKE: The hon. Member will have ample opportunity and time to raise this point in Committee on the Code Bill. The question before us is merely formal, the object of the Resolution being merely to enable us to go into Committee. It seems that strange misconceptions have got abroad as to the operation of the Science and Art Department Minute. I am entirely at issue with the hon. Member as to the statements he has made, and in Committee on the Bill I shall be quite prepared to answer any points that may be raised.

(4.42.) MR. T. M. HEALY: I object to the term used that this is merely a formal stage. It has been the immemorial practice of Parliament to have legitimate discussion at this stage, and I would remind the Committee that it was on this stage that we smashed the Bill which was to confer an official post on Colonel King Harman. In deference, however, to the appeal made to me by the right hon. Member for Derby, I will not persist with my Motion to report Progress. I would point out that Members on this side of the House have been continually charged, by inuendo and by broad statements in the newspapers which support the Government, with obstruction, and now the Government themselves have put down as the first Order a comparatively unimportant matter, which might occupy the whole evening if hon. Members insisted on their rights, to the exclusion of the Local Taxation Bill. I repeat that hon. Members have been deprived of their rights to facilitate important measures. I myself have reason to complain of the way I have been treated with regard to a Bill of my own, and in such circumstances how can the Government expect indulgence from private Members? I believe the proper policy for the Opposition to pursue is to take every opportunity of exposing the unsatisfactory manner in which the Government are conducting public business.

(4.42.) MR. CONYBEARE: I may explain that I am the person responsible for this matter running on now. It was brought on after 12 o'clock this morning, and I challenged. I did so because I protest, in common with a great many other hon. Members, against the revolutionary theory which is constantly being advanced by the Government, that these important stages should be regarded as merely formal. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury has expressed the opinion that it is most unusual for opposition to be offered to a stage of this kind. For my part, however, I shall make it usual to oppose such stages, at any rate until we have sufficient explanation on the matters in regard to which we desire information. I do not desire to prolong this discussion, or to oppose this stage on the merits of the question, because I have expressed myself in favour of the new Code and of the manner in which it has been introduced. I did, however, insist last night upon this matter being taken at an hour at which it could be discussed if necessary.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

LOCAL TAXATION (CUSTOMS AND EXCISE) DUTIES BILL.—(No. 244.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 17, to leave out sub-section (ii.), in order to insert the words—"(ii.) The sum of three hundred and fifty thousand pounds shall be applied in England for the purposes of agricultural, commercial, and technical instruction, as defined in section eight of 'The Technical Instruction Act, 1889,' and in Wales either for the said purposes or for the purposes defined in section seventeen of 'The Welsh Intermediate Education Act, 1889.'"—(*Mr. Arthur Acland.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words '(ii.) The sum of three hundred and fifty thousand pounds shall be applied for such extinction of licences in England' stand part of the Clause."

(4.45.) MR. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness): Your ruling, Sir, of last Tuesday has virtually made the Debate on this Amendment a Debate on the Second Reading of the objectionable provision of this particular Bill. As I have already explained in the Debate on the Second Reading, I confine my objections to the Bill to the three clauses and three sub-sections which provide for the extinction of licences by purchase. I give the Government full credit for a desire to promote temperance, and only take exception to the very mistaken manner in which they endeavour to carry out their excellent intentions. I will take this opportunity of expressing my regret that the Government have not, before bringing in this proposal, taken steps to find out what is the real opinion of those who have for many years been engaged in promoting the temperance cause throughout the country. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board is more or less a novice in temperance reform; but if the right hon. Gentleman had asked me or the hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth, we should have warned him that, so far as the main body of the Temperance Party is concerned, any proposal that can be either remotely or directly calculated to establish a vested interest in a licence which is only granted for 12 months will be resisted. If the proposal of the Government only gave £10 for the extinction of one single licence, we should oppose it as vehemently as we oppose the whole proposals of the Government. We are fighting a principle, and we must see this question settled once for all. We are determined to go on with our opposition; and if the Bill becomes law, the Temperance Party must initiate a movement to promote its immediate repeal. I venture to make one more appeal to Her Majesty's Government. There have been meetings of the various sections of the Unionist Party to see how the business of the House can be proceeded with, and it is clear, from yesterday's proceedings, that divided counsels prevail amongst the Party opposite as to how progress can best be obtained. I submit that the best and quickest way would be to withdraw from the House these particular clauses of this particular Bill. I do not for a moment wish that the Government should abandon all their proposals, but only this small and contested portion of them. The taxes dealt with by the Bill amount to £1,400,000, while this particular money which has been thus earmarked is only £440,000. On the Second Reading of the Bill I referred to the Whip issued by the Church of England Temperance Society, in which Canon Ellison urged his friends to vote for the Second Reading on condition of certain Amendments being brought forward. I did not, however, press the matter very far on that occasion, because the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board distinctly promised that he would bring forward certain Amendments and put them upon the Paper when the House was in Committee. Here we are in Committee, and still no Amendments have been put down by the right hon. Gentleman; all that we have received for that pledge is the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Grimsby. That Amendment is harmless enough in its way, but rather the sort of colourless Amendment we should expect from the source from which it comes. One of the points in connection with the Church of England Temperance Society is that compensation should be on a limited basis put forward by the Society, and restricted to a period of 10 years.

*(4.50.) THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I do not want the hon. Member to be under any misunderstanding. I indicated before that, although unquestionably in their letter the Church of England Temperance Society stated as one of the conditions of a final settlement of the question, that compensation should be limited to a term of years, that condition had been expressly withdrawn by Canon Ellison and those who accompanied him as being one of the points upon which they did not desire to press any Amendments to the present Bill, recognising that this Bill is not a Bill to set up any question of a scale of compensation.

(4.52.) MR. CAINE: I think it well that this particular point should be cleared up. I want to know what Amendments the Government intend to propose. There has been a distinct suggestion that there are to be Amendments introduced, and I understand that my right hon. Friend accepts the suggestion that no new licence shall have any force beyond the premises for which it is originally granted. [Mr. RITCHIE assented.] Then there is the existing power of the Licensing Authority to refuse a licence. Now we understand what Amendments the Government intend to support; the only one is that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Grimsby.

*(4.54.) MR. RITCHIE: My hon. Friend must not assume that there are not others of a minor character, which the Government might be prepared to accept.

(4.54.) MR. CAINE: Those are the main proposals as far as the Church of England Society is concerned. I would point out that the Government has rendered clear its intention to transfer the Licensing Authority to the County Councils, which will be already complicated by these purchase clauses; and when the Licensing Authority and the County Council become one, this Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman will become absolutely useless for the purpose for which it is intended. I hope that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board will take this matter into account, and consider whether he cannot himself draft some Amendments which will really make it quite clear to the House that any Licensing Authority, whether existing or one hereafter to be called into existence of a different character, shall possess the same powers as those now enjoyed by the Magistrates. If the right hon. Gentleman does not amend the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Grimsby, some of the Temperance Party will have to do so. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board said yesterday that the attention of the Government had been forced to this particular aspect of the temperance question by the great increase of the consumption of strong drink. For my own part, I admit that. Then the right hon. Gentleman said that the measure was not a large one. There, I think, the right hon. Gentleman was wrong; it is one of great magnitude. The right hon. Gentleman made a statement as to the opinion of the Temperance Party that the number of houses affect the proportionate consumption of drink. We do not hold any such views. The view which I have always held is that the amount of drunkenness in the country rises and falls with the consumption of intoxicating liquor, and it makes no difference whether the drink is sold in 10 houses worth £100 a year each or in one worth £1,000 a year. The other day a deputation went to the Watch Committee of Liverpool, a body similar to that to which appeals will be made under this Bill. The deputation called attention to certain licensed houses which foster prostitution, and asked that representations should be made to the Licensing Authorities with the view of getting rid of the houses. In one of the streets there were four of these houses. Suppose the authorities entered into negotiations to get rid of one of these houses; they could not afford to deal with more; the whole of the customers of the suppressed house would swarm to the other houses. If they could reduce the number of public houses in Liverpool from 2,000 to 1,000, I have no doubt it would be an important step in the interests of temperance; but to say that, by reducing 2,000 public houses to 1,998, the cause of temperance will be advanced is manifestly absurd; it is childish. I admit that a large decrease in the number of public houses would have some appreciable effect; but a trivial reduction of the number would only mean that the trade of one house would be transferred to another house close by. The right hon. Gentleman has said a good deal about public opinion. He quoted the meeting at Gateshead. Well, I read a letter this morning giving me the facts as to that meeting. The voting was declared by the Mayor to be equal, so that the meeting tells as much on one side as on the other.

*Mr. RITCHIE: I said so.

Mr. CAINE: Then it was hardly worth while to quote it. I need not pursue that subject further. I have had some experience of public meetings since this Bill was brought forward. The other day I was in Wigan, a town known as a great place for the consumption of intoxicating liquors. There are 220 fully licensed public houses to a population of less than 50,000. The town is represented in this House by a Conservative. A public meeting was convened—the largest ever held in the town. An agent of the licensed victuallers attended. I refer to Mr. Hicks, who, for the last 10 or 12 years, has been the plague of our lives, and who has great experience in the organisation of opposition to our meetings. On the top of the ordinary attendance there were 60 or 70 tipsy ruffians. An amendment was moved by Mr. Hicks, who spoke for 20 minutes, and seconded by a local solicitor, in favour of the Bill; but, out of 2,500, only about 50 hands were held up in favour of the amendment. I went to my own constituency on Wednesday. I hold a unique position, as I have been censured by every political organisation in my constituency. The meeting was the largest we have had there. About 1,400 people were present. An amendment was moved, but only two hands were held up for it. At a meeting in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, not one hand could be found held up against resolutions condemning the Bill. It is quite clear that public opinion is with us and against the Bill. It has been asked—Where are the Petitions in favour of this Bill? My experience of the licensed victualler is that he is as well able to get up a Petition as anyone else. Why has he not done so in this case? For the reason that it is clear the old publican who was to a certain extent the friend of his customers has vanished, and that in his place there is the manager for the big brewer. I hope a note will be taken of the Liberal Unionist opinion in regard to this Bill. I tell the Government frankly that the opinion of Liberal Unionists in the country—of the rank and file—is against this Bill, as the Government will find out to their cost if they alienate some of their best supporters, by insisting on a Bill which nobody cares twopence about. I know something of the inner working of the Liberal Unionist Party. Public opinion has been roused on this question as I have not seen it roused for 25 years. I am, perhaps, more of an agitator than a Member of Parliament, but I tell the Government I have never seen the country so deeply moved as it is on this question. The Government may, if they please, go on to their destruction. They may carry their Bill, but they will find a large number of their followers are gone. The Government profess to care a great deal more for the Union between England and Ireland than for any other subject. I care a great deal; but it is because I believe that the line of action the Government have taken will result in their absolute defeat and rout that I beg them to re-consider their decision, and withdraw these clauses while they may. So much for public opinion. The real issue before the House is: shall we take some steps to bring down the number of public houses to the wants of the locality, or shall we leave them as they are until agitation ripens and sweeps them away altogether? I would adopt the latter course rather than the former, for I think the effect of the Government Bill will be to block the progress of temperance reform. A short time ago, when the respected father of my hon. Friend the Member for Leicester was sitting on the Bench in Liverpool, an application was made for a new licence, and in refusing it he said there were so many houses already that unless the whole neighbourhood were drunken he could not understand how on earth the publicans made a living. Well, they do make their living out of drunkards. The right hon. Gentleman said he could not understand why the Temperance Party were fighting this Bill. In the three days' Debate on the Second Reading we endeavoured to explain our reasons. We oppose it because, for the first time, it introduces the principle of vested interests in licences. As a Liberal it has been part of my business to resist vested interests and to get rid of them, and I am not now going to establish one. What will be the operation under this Bill? I believe the greater number of the County Councils will receive such pressure from their constituents that they will refuse to put it in force, and it will become a dead letter. Once a single public house anywhere is bought out the principle of the money value of the licence is successfully established. The Bill is to be used to buy out the disorderly and rotten public houses, houses which are the resorts of thieves and prostitutes; and if they are to get compensation, when it comes to a question of reducing the number of public houses generally, it will be urged that the better houses shall be compensated still more.

*Mr. RITCHIE: I must correct the hon. Member. The Government have never said it was their object to get rid of bad houses, but the unnecessary houses. It would be quite within the power of a County Council to refuse to buy a bad house.

Mr. CAINE: Of course I accept the right hon. Gentleman's contradiction, but certainly the right hon. Gentleman said that one of the grounds on which the Government have pressed their Bill on the public is that they would be able to get rid of these houses.

*Mr. RITCHIE: I used the words "small fry."

Mr. CAINE: The right hon. Gentleman spoke of houses that did not pay without committing a breach of the law.

*Mr. RITCHIE: I said there were many public houses that did not pay, and that the only way in which they could be made to pay was by doing what they ought not to do.

Mr. CAINE: If there are public houses that cannot be made to pay without breaking the law, it is quite clear they have no claim for compensation, and the only way they can establish a claim is by making themselves a nuisance to the public. The Bill is, *de facto*, a measure to buy out the blackguards in a respectable trade, and the opponents of the Bill will not consent for one moment to allow that which is public money as distinctly as money raised from any other source to be devoted to getting rid by money compensation of men who are an evil to the community and a danger to society, and who ought to have been long since got rid of by the Magistrates. If the Bill becomes law it will amount to a deliberate censure by the House of the administration of the Licensing Law by the Magistrates of the United Kingdom.

I cannot understand the hon. and gallant Member for Portsmouth voting for a Bill which is a censure on himself. The opponents of the Bill intend to resist this Bill to the uttermost, and if they are beaten in the House they will go to the country. I believe the Government would have found it quite difficult enough to carry the country on their Irish policy. Now, I am quite certain they will do nothing of the kind. Their work is cut out for them, and they have laid upon themselves and the Unionist Party throughout the country a task they will never be able to fulfil, and they will be beaten hip and thigh at the next General Election if they persevere with the Bill. I believe the Unionist Party is running down a steep place into the sea, in regard to this particular proposal, and, so far as I am concerned, I am going to remain at the top and see the Government go down alone.

(5.23.) Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon, &c.): I have to ask the indulgence of the House in addressing it for the first time. I may say that the Carnarvonshire County Council have passed a resolution condemning the proposals of the Government, and very few of the Conservative members of the Council ventured to oppose it. I have not the slightest hesitation in declaring that were there an election in Wales at the present moment a clean sweep would be made of all the members who registered their vote in favour of this Bill. I object to the Bill in the first place, because it establishes a new principle in the Licensing Laws. It affirms that you cannot extinguish a licence even if the house is not required for the locality. My second objection is that you are giving £350,000 as compensation to the publicans, without providing that they shall only be compensated on the basis of the profits of legitimate trading. There were 166,000 convictions for drunkenness last year, and there were no doubt many thousands of cases of drunkenness in which there were no prosecutions. If you are going to compensate the publicans you should compensate them on the basis of profits on legitimate trade. Every case of drunkenness really represents a breach of the law committed by a publican, and it also represents an increase in the profits of a publican. If this proposal is carried, the House will be capitalising profits made by a gross and wholesale infringement of the law. We have heard a great deal about law and order in Ireland. I think there ought to be a Coercion Act for publicans armed with all the modern appliances, such as Star Chamber inquiries, informers, "shadows," and Removable Magistrates. Why not punish the publican for an infringement of the law, with the same amount of zeal as the Government display in punishing the Irish Members? If there were such an Act, I believe that very few publicans would survive the inquisition, and the £350,000 would form an ample sum to compensate those who remained. Another objection I have to make to the Government proposal is that the sum of £350,000 is grossly inadequate for the purposes set forth in the Bill. We are all agreed that a reduction in the number of public houses will promote temperance, but this money will not suffice for any appreciable reduction. Take instances in my own constituency. Eifion, a small town, is infested with licences, and if this sum is to be distributed over the whole of Carnarvonshire, it would take more than £1,000,000 to reduce the number of houses to a point at which they would be sufficient for the wants of the inhabitants. We have been told by the hon. Member for Barrow that it will require £250,000,000 to compensate the whole of the publicans of the United Kingdom. We must reduce the number of public houses by 50 per cent. before we attain the object we have in view, and for that, £125,000,000 will be necessary. Yet this £350,000 is offered to do it all. There never was a more puny attempt made to grapple with a great evil since the days of the Liliputian King who drew his hanger to attack Gulliver. But that is not all. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was very profuse with his sympathy for temperance, and the President of the Local Government Board was equally profuse. What has been the outcome of all this profusion? This Local Option, which I venture to declare, as far as Wales at least is concerned, will not have the slightest effect on the drinking habits of the people. It is only by the merest chance that this proposal can hope to succeed. This Bill will do nothing at all unless it buys out the most pernicious and worst class of public houses. The pernicious and worst class of public houses are the most profitable, and where they exist there is surrounding them the worst misery and desolation. Why should that class of publican sell? He has a good livelihood, and he could only be induced to sell by the offer of an extravagant price. The Government, in order to attain any success for this measure will have to depend upon the chapter of accidents. A very eminent writer has pourtrayed the world as governed by chance. It is only in such a world that fortuitous statesmanship of this order can ever hope to succeed. If the proposal of the noble Lord the Member for Paddington to purchase licences compulsorily had been accepted, this objection would not apply. The County Council then would state their case for the suppression of a licence which, in their opinion, did harm to the public. Unfortunately, the temperance ardour of the noble Lord has evaporated. Like many another temperance advocate the holidays seem to have affected his temperance principles. His, at the best, was a kind of mushroom teetotalism, which grew no one knew why, or when, and which has disappeared, how, no one exactly knows. But from the constant communications of the noble Lord with the licensed victuallers, the Temperance Party in this House have good reason to believe now that it was somewhat of an alcoholic fungus. The noble Lord and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham seem now to have joined in the duty of praising compensation. It was only the other day that the right hon. Gentleman entertained a few of the brewers. So strongly was he in favour of the principle of compensation that he expressed great surprise that it was necessary for them to approach him on the subject. He could quite understand his Liberalism being doubted, but on this great question of compensating the publicans he ought to be above suspicion. But we simple people of Wales can hardly understand either the right hon. Gentleman or the noble Lord. They are to us a great mystery. The right hon. Gentleman not so very long ago, I think it was in Wales, promulgated the doctrine of ransom. Now, if we understand that great doctrine, it is the exact converse of compensation. Both the right hon. Gentleman and the noble Lord seem to be a kind of political contortionists, after the fashion of the American performers, who can set their feet in one direction and their face in another, and no one knows which way they intend to travel. My last objection to this proposal is that it delays the great work of temperance reform. There are obstacles to every great reform, and there is no necessity for creating fictitious and artificial barriers to combating this great evil. I believe it is in your power to do much to improve the habits and condition of the people by improving their environments. That is why I believe in this great question of temperance reform. It removes inducements to evil and substitutes incitements to good, and it is because the Government Bill delays that great work that I think the proposal is greatly to be deplored. I thank the House for the kind manner in which it has listened to me.

*(5.40.) MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): The hon. Gentleman who has just resumed his seat, in his maiden speech, has stated his belief that it is in the power of this House to do a great deal for temperance reform. I believe exactly the same thing, and I think that after a life of 35 years spent in connection with the temperance movement, I can claim not to be a mushroom teetotaler, but to be, in the true sense of the word, a temperance man. If I thought that this Bill created a new vested interest for the publican, I would oppose it to the uttermost, but it is because I believe it does nothing of the kind, and because I am anxious that something should be done for temperance reform, I am not willing to go on waiting, but desire to do something at once. I have been constantly referred to during the Debate, and have been reproached for the position I have taken up on this Bill, and I, therefore, want to make my position clear. Why do I vote for this Bill? I vote for this Bill because I am anxious to see the adoption of the principle of equitable compensation, against which I have not heard a word from the Front Opposition Bench. The Member for Wolverhampton asked the Government why they persist in going on with

a Bill that is opposed by the whole Temperance Party. I admit that the overwhelming majority of the Temperance Party is opposed to this Bill, but I have had two occasions during the last 20 years to judge of the action of the temperance leaders with respect to public measures. In 1871 a Bill was introduced into the House that would have been of enormous service to the temperance cause. It was met by the Temperance Party almost in the same way as this Bill has been met. Because it proposed to give a 10 years' lease instead of an annual privilege, it was declared to create a new vested interest, and the leaders of the Temperance Party gave away the grandest chance they had had during the century of effecting a legitimate and beneficent temperance reform. Mr. Bruce was forced to withdraw his Bill, not because the publicans opposed it, but because the Temperance Party folded their arms and refused to lift a hand to further it. I protested, and so did hundreds and thousands of moderate temperance men, but the leaders had their own way, and they have been 19 years wandering in the wilderness since. Now, I am not prepared to wander for ever and a day in the wilderness. There is a Party in the House professing to be temperance reformers, and their principle is that they would rather endure all the nameless horrors of this drink traffic than pay a sixpence for its extinction. I do not belong to that Party and I will not. I am prepared to pay a good many sixpences to get rid of such a gigantic evil, and I believe this Bill, by suspending the issue of new licences and establishing what I believe to be the sound and just principle of equitable compensation, is a beginning that will lead to better things. Another occasion upon which I had an opportunity of testing the wisdom of the temperance leaders, was in 1878, when the Irish Sunday Closing Bill was carried. The Government of the day proposed to introduce certain Amendments which exempted five of the large cities and towns in Ireland from the full operation of the measure. When these Amendments were placed upon the Order Paper the whole Temperance Party denounced them; they would rather the whole Bill was sacrificed. But those in charge of the Bill did not take their advice, and so the Bill passed, and if it had not passed then it would not have been passed now. I will not, therefore, for the sake of an abstract principle, consent to abandon possible good for a greater problematical good in the future. I am also influenced by another motive. This Bill applies to Ireland. I plead for the principle of equitable compensation in England, but I submit that the law is in such a state in Ireland that it goes a good way beyond this. It has been decided that once a licensed publican in Ireland gets his licence, he may sell it, and the Licensing Authority cannot refuse to transfer, except the applicant is of bad character, or conducts his house in an improper manner. The Queen's Bench, in 1877, set up a legal vested interest for the Irish publican, and since that time interests have been created and settlements made, so that in Ireland you must either compensate these men or confiscate their property. Therefore, I was largely influenced by the state of the Irish law in the vote I gave on this question. But while I say this, I wish also to say that I have not the slightest enthusiasm about this Bill. I am not going to rob the publican, but I am not going to fight his battle. The hon. Member for Barrow has said that this Bill is going to be the ruin of the Liberal Unionist Party, and I notice that he was cheered from this side of the House. He had supposed that was their supreme ambition. Then why not pass this Bill, and do it. My hon. Friend does not seem to believe that the reduction of public houses on a small scale affects the thing one way or the other. My experience in the City of Dublin has been entirely different. During the last 10 years the Recorder of Dublin, who is the sole Licensing Authority, has absolutely refused to grant any new licences, and what has been done is this: Where there is a new district, and where the want of a public house is pleaded, the Recorder has insisted upon the new applicant buying up either one or two old houses, and the invariable custom has been to buy houses in the lanes and back streets, which could not be superintended by the police, in exchange for a new licence in a new district. That was exactly the way in which he thought this Bill would work, and that is one of the reasons I am glad to support it. My position is this: I am a temperance man, and work for the reform of the drunkard; but I do not understand that it is necessary to attach to that the ruin of the publican as well. The publican is a creation of the law, and we cannot possibly get rid of him, and I submit that, taking the Front Bench utterances, we never shall get rid of him without the acceptance of the principle embodied in this Bill. Because I think this is a measure that points to larger and better things in the future, I am supporting it.

(5.55.) MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I shall not enter on the very tempting matter of considering the consistency of the vote which the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down is about to give with that which he gave in 1888. There are wider matters before us. I shall notice briefly one or two of the allegations of the hon. Gentleman. It has been asserted confidently and boldly on the other side of the House that this Bill does not sanction the principle of compensation, and that has been a main ground, I may say the main ground, upon which Her Majesty's Government have commended it to the acceptance of the House. But the hon. Gentleman, whose support as that of an independent Member is valuable for other reasons than the rarity of such support in this Debate, has given as his main reason for supporting the Bill that which absolutely contradicts and oversets the fundamental principle of the Government, because he has supported the Bill on the ground that the Bill embodies the principle of compensation, which they maintain it does not establish. And those contradictory declarations are, notwithstanding, to result in one and the same vote in one and the same Lobby. I agree more with the hon. Gentleman on that point than with the Government, except in this, that I contend we are not now discussing the question of compensation at large—very many Members of the House have the strongest opinion upon that subject—but what we are discussing now, as was defined by the hon. Member for Barrow, is the principle of that compensation which is actually before us. The hon. Gentleman then went on to challenge the judgment of the temperance leaders. He challenged their proceedings upon two occasions and on one of them I will make a remark. His want of confidence in their judgment leads him to vote against the course they recommend. He refers to 1871—and here I have the pleasure of agreeing with very much of what he says—and he says the Bill of that year would have done a world of good and effected a vast reduction in the number of public houses. I am not indisposed to accept that statement, as I was one of the Government responsible for the formation and introduction of that Bill. What is the respective guilt of parties in respect of that Bill? That Bill, no doubt, failed in some degree, owing mainly to one particular cause—the opposition of the publicans; but, combined with that opposition, to the indifference and lukewarmness of the Temperance Party. But the opposition of the publicans was the opposition of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and the Gentleman who is so shocked at going with temperance reformers, because they were lukewarm in the cause of what he considers a good measure, has no scruple at all about acting with those who, as he says, were in full cry against the Bill, with the principle of which he says he agrees. The hon. Gentleman says he will vote for the Bill mainly on account of the Irish portion of it; but is that the main portion of the Bill? Am I to look into every corner of a Bill, and, disregarding its main scope and purpose, if I find some particular nook or cranny where there is something I approve of, such as the operation of the Bill in Ireland, then to say that on that account I will accept the whole Bill? The public houses in Ireland are for the supply of 5,000,000 persons, and those in England for the supply of 35,000,000. Is it rational, when you are dealing with a Bill which affects 35,000,000, to overlook all the considerations that can be urged against the Bill in respect of its operation on the 35,000,000, and to say "I will look only at the effect it has on the 5,000,000 of Irish people?"

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: My position is that I consider the Irish publican has a legal right and the British publican an equitable right, and I am anxious in the interests of temperance to do something by which that right may be recognised as speedily as possible.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: The claim made in the interests of temperance I wish by-and-by to bring to the test. My complaint is that the hon. Member said he was greatly governed by the operation of the Bill in Ireland, and I say that the operation of the Bill in Ireland is of necessity a secondary and subordinate operation of the Bill, which it is quite possible to subject to separate treatment. If there is a legal right in Ireland, it constitutes no reason for voting for a Bill which is to operate disadvantageously as regards public houses in England. The hon. Member reminds us that the hon. Member for Barrow had said that Bill would be fatal to what he termed the Unionist Party, which I believe to be the disunionist party, but which, out of courtesy, I will call the Unionist Party, although that involves a contradiction of my convictions and feelings. The hon. Member for Barrow, in the course of his able speech, has defended himself against being supposed to be a lukewarm supporter of the present Government, and of the so-called Unionist cause; but my hon. Friend might have spared himself that trouble, seeing the amount of valuable matter he had to produce. We have all had quite sufficient experience of his zeal on behalf of that Party to believe firmly in his sincerity. The hon. Member for South Tyrone said—"If the Bill will have the effect, as you allege, of ruining the Unionist Party, why do you not vote for it and ruin that Party?" No doubt the hon. Member thought that in offering that suggestion he had made a great *coup*. We believe this Bill to be of vital consequence, and we believe it to be as ruinous as it is important, and, that being so, it is totally against our principle to vote for this Bill for the sake of ulterior objects. I am not surprised at the argument of the hon. Gentleman, because, as I understand him and the body of Members with whom he has been acting, they have become habituated to this practice of continually voting for measures they disapprove of, and refraining from the support of measures of which they approve, simply because of that ulterior object which the hon. Gentleman recommends us on this occasion to keep exclusively in view. The hon. Member will understand that I cannot accept the advice he has kindly given us. I was obliged to intervene in this Debate, although the House has kindly heard me before, on account of my responsibility for the use of a particular term. Before I advert to that, I wish to say a word upon the Amendment. I am able to support what has been said in the able speech of the hon. Member for Glamorganshire. We do not admit this Bill to be a step in the direction of temperance. The principle is perfectly sound that you should not insist upon achieving at once your whole object and ultimate aim when you have not the force that is necessary for that purpose, but you should be content to arrive at it step by step. This is all very well; but, according to our view, and especially according to the view of the Principality of Wales, it is true that this Bill takes a step, but it is a step in the wrong direction, it is a retrograde step that leads us a great deal further from the purpose aimed at than we were before. I believe the people of Wales especially look upon this Bill as poison, while they regard as food the provision for education proposed by the Amendment; and they say, "Take away the poison and give us the food." In Wales there is a much stronger desire for intermediate schools than can be satisfied with the funds that are available for the purpose. You may tell me, and I admit, that people are ready enough to put their hands into the public purse when it costs them nothing; but it is not so in Wales, for there the people, with laudable public spirit, make immense efforts to provide these schools for themselves. It is in these circumstances the Welsh people ask that this money may be diverted to a purpose of inestimable good, of which they approve, from one which will not only not be valuable, but will be mischievous and ruinous to the country. The President of the Local Government Board said that some one had irrationally spoken of this Bill as a public house endowment Bill. I have a strong opinion that there is no more objectionable practice in politics, or one to be more carefully eschewed, than an endeavour to disparage a good cause by affixing upon it a bad name. The right hon. Gentleman thinks it is a practice I have indulged in. I accept the full responsibility for the quoted description, and I have not heard any other name which so adequately describes the purpose and operation of the Bill. But a slight mistake has been made; if it be called a publican's endowment Bill, in my opinion, that would not be at all a just description. There are many faults in the Bill, grave faults, and it is difficult to determine their order of procedure, but, undoubtedly, among the faults of the Bill not the least is the exceedingly small regard it has for the interests of publicans as compared with the interests of others concerned. I have received a communication from a respectable publican, who expresses his strong objection to this Bill, and declares that it is brought in, not in the interest of his class, but in the interests of others more powerful than they. I do not know if I originated the name for the Bill, I do not know whether any of my hon. Friends claim the authorship. I am almost disposed to compete for the honour of the responsibility. Accepting the full responsibility for the description of this Bill as a public house endowment Bill, I will say why it cannot be fairly described by any other name. The hon. member for Sheffield, in an able and telling speech, referred to the operation of the Bill upon purchase transactions, and contended that the giving of public money for the extinction of licences invested licences with a value which amounted to endowment. In my opinion that is not a tenth, nor a twentieth, nor a hundredth part of the sense in which the Bill is an endowment. The mode in which it is an endowment is this. From the moment the Bill has become the law of the land every interest in every public house will be worth more money in the market, and cannot be acquired except at a higher price. That, I think, is not an unfair mode of stating the case. I want the proposition to be tested. I challenge opposition. Unfortunately this business of vast investment by large proprietary interests in public houses, as far as I know, has been a monstrous evil, the growth almost entirely of our own time. Within our own time it has swollen to gigantic proportions, and now constitutes the enormous, the almost insurmountable difficulty in the way of dealing satisfactorily with the public house question. That evil, which is in constant progress, depends upon this, that a certain expectancy of the renewal of the licence leads gentlemen interested in the manufacture of liquor, and makes it worth their while to invest largely in public houses, and to compensate themselves by binding the publican to buy the liquor they manufacture, irrespective, in a certain degree, either of quality or of price. You are now going to add to that expectancy. To that expectancy, which has been declared to rest upon no legal basis whatever, and the whole value of which may be enormously and detrimentally affected by many conceivable proceedings that could be taken under the present law without raising any claim for compensation, you are now going to add the establishment of this principle, that the authority is to go into the market provided with public money, raised out of the public taxes, and buy up licences, irrespective of the further tremendous objection that the price is virtually to be fixed by the person interested. Will any man tell me that by the establishment of this principle by law, this act of legislative countenance given to the doctrine of vested interest in licences, an approach, at least, will not be made to the laying down an absolute rule that no licence can be touched—apart from offence against the law—except in consideration of payment of public money? Will any man tell me that that will not at once upraise the value of every saleable public interest from one end of the country to another? If that is so, that is a public house endowment Bill. It does not matter——

*MR. RITCHIE: We do not say that.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Do not say what?

*MR. RITCHIE: We do not say that. We do not interfere in any degree with the existing powers of the Magistrates.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I am not indisposed to be corrected by-and-by. I will only say at this moment that, in my opinion, there never were more idle words than the words of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman evidently thought yesterday that he was making an announcement of importance to the House when he read out exultingly the terms of the Amendment which is to declare that the local powers of Magistrates shall remain intact. Now, Sir, if he were to multiply those Amendments, and plaster them all over his Bill, repeated a hundred thousand times over, laying them thick as leaves in Vallombrosa, or till they were like the advertisements of Pear's Soap, they would not acquire one shade of value in the eyes of any one of the millions of people who are opposed to this Bill. For the prevention of enhancement of value they are absolutely utterly nugatory. I, therefore, say that this Bill is a public house endowment Bill, because it adds a value to every proprietary interest in premises that are now licensed for the sale of liquor. Now, Sir, it may be a long time before you arrive at the possibility of a comprehensive, sweeping, and conclusive measure with regard to the treatment of the liquor traffic, but I object to this Bill upon two grounds—first of all, that we have under the present law, and compatibly with the principle of the present law, great means and possibilities of good; and, secondly, that you not only take away those means and possibilities, but you also interpose a new and enormous obstacle in that increment of value which is to run throughout the country in connection with this Bill, to which I have just referred as the public house endowment Bill. The present law has in itself principles that are, at any rate, of some value. The present law rests unquestionably and strictly upon these grounds, among others, that public houses are to be absolutely limited to the wants of the district. Can any man say that they are so limited? No, Sir, they are known to be in multitudes of districts in the country very far in excess even of a most liberal estimate of those wants. Why are they not brought down to the measure of those wants? Because you have the licensing power in the hands of a body which is not well qualified to administer that portion of the present law with the stringency and firmness with which it ought to be administered. We always contended for the placing of that power in the hands of an Elective Authority, and we have been resisted in the endeavour to obtain that object. We are convinced, at least I for one am convinced, that if you got that power—not for the whole purposes of the Temperance Party, but for the purpose of acting on the acknowledged principle of the present law—once fairly lodged in the hands of an Elective Body, like the County Councils, to be exercised upon their responsibility, very great good would be obtained. I do not mean to say that County Councils would be justified in going to work upon what are called extreme principles of temperance. I will suppose, for the sake of argument, that there might possibly be a County Council with a majority in favour not only of Local Option, but in favour of using that Local Option for the purpose of the total extinction of public houses—it would be, in my opinion, an entire abuse of the power if it were to act upon that principle, because that is not the principle of the existing law which they are to administer. They are to examine in good faith the question of sufficiency. Examining in good faith the question of sufficiency, they would find immense room for reduction. How does it operate upon that room for reduction? How does it operate upon the possibility of reduction? I will suppose now that the Bill shall unhappily have been passed into law, and I will suppose also, what I have nc doubt we shall see before many years are over, that the licensing power is placed under the control of an Elective Authority in a county. What is, then, to be the position of the Elective Authority? Will any man tell me that that Elective Authority can proceed to-day to pay probably a large sum of money to the person interested in one particular public house in a district overstocked, and can to-morrow go to deal with the case of another public house in their licensing operations, and withdraw the renewal of that licence without paying one farthing for it? We have no occasion in this matter to resort to figures of speech. The facts are too grave, too solid, either to require or admit of exaggeration or enhancement. My contention is, that this power which is already established in the law, and which might become a very vigorous and useful power when it was lodged in the hands of a body well fitted for its exercise, is to be reduced to absolute paralysis, and we are to go—I said one step, but I should have said many steps, backward in the way of temperance. In my opinion, the law is capable of immense improvement in ways that would not give the slightest claim for compensation. It is quite plain that if it were the view of Parliament to introduce the public lease system which prevails in Sweden, that might have immense effect in destroying the money value of public house investments Very likely it would; but nobody would for one moment say it gave a claim for compensation to anybody. The Member for Barrow made it a point to-night that the direct operation of this Bill must be to pay public money for buying up the licences, not of public houses merely, but of bad public houses. Now, this is a separate point in the indictment—a strong point and a capital point. Is it true or is it not true? The President of the Local Government Board has, this evening, used some words which I take to be of very high importance. He has indicated what it is to make a public house into a goldfield. It is misconduct. [Mr. RITCHIE expressed dissent.] The right hon. Gentleman never used the word "goldfield." No, I am quoting his sentiments in language which, I thought, would give it a true but lively expression. To be correct in syllable and letter, the right hon. Gentleman said that—

> "There were a number of public houses which did not pay, but which can be made to pay, by doing what, perhaps, they ought not to do."

I do not think that is far from saying that by misconduct a public house can be turned into a goldfield.

*MR. RITCHIE: What I alluded to was this: I was accused by the hon. Member for Barrow of having said that the public houses which the County Councils under these powers would buy out would be the bad public houses. I denied having said so; and in answer to a further challenge, I said that the words I had used in connection with the incident were "the small fry." Then, again, I was challenged upon the point as to whether or not I had said that the same smaller public houses were unprofitable unless they had done something which they ought not to have done. I said that many of the owners did get a living in that way. But I never indicated that that was the class which I expected or believed would be bought up by the County Councils.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: The right hon. Gentleman was entitled to interrupt me if he thought I was misrepresenting him; but he has not said a word which contravenes the effect of what I attributed to him. The charge against the right hon. Gentleman of his having said that this was the class of public house which would be bought up by the County Councils is a charge which I did not make. I have made no reference to it. I have not heard the right hon. Gentleman say that, and, therefore, I must leave the matter to be dealt with by those who may be inclined to contest the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman. I do not enter into the matter, because I have not the necessary knowledge. [Mr. J. MORLEY handed the right hon. Gentleman a newspaper.] But, perhaps, as it is a matter of public interest I may read from a newspaper what the right hon. Gentleman is reported to have stated to a deputation—

> "We are, however, persuaded that there is an enormous amount of harm done by the smaller houses—houses of comparatively little or no market value; and they probably would be of no market value if they were conducted in such a way as we should wish to see them conducted."

In referring to the language of the right hon. Gentleman I do not at all wish, to use a vulgar phrase, to put him in a corner. I have no such intention. I rather wish to compliment the right hon. Gentleman on having made a declaration which was absolutely true, and which was of great value and of great importance in reference to the present subject. I do not say that the right hon. Gentleman has said that the ill-conducted houses will be the ones which the County Councils will be placed under the strongest pressure to purchase. I do not know whether he has stated so, but I take the liberty of saying it myself. I found the argument on the Bill as it stands. It invests the County Councils with funds for the purpose of purchase. The Bill as it stands and the Government's declarations have properly encouraged the public and the Local Authorities to make representations to the County Councils for the purchase of licences. What representations will be the strongest? Why, the representations which point out that public house A or B is a nuisance to the neighbourhood, that it catches all the people—as we have heard of a particular public house near the dock gates in Liverpool—on the way to their work; a house that would be valueless as an ordinary house, but which is a true goldfield by reason, not so much of its position, as of the manner in which that position is used. The County Councils may, and I think very probably will, decline to be the agents to act under this Bill. I believe it to be most highly probable that large bodies of public opinion will be put in motion in several localities to prevent the County Councils from laying out the public money in a manner so improvident and so ruinous. But there is a possibility that in some cases opinion will act upon the County Councils to stimulate them to purchase; and, again, I invite contradiction or challenge of this assertion—that where there is this action of extraneous opinion on the County Councils to move in the exercise of powers of purchase, local public opinion will infallibly point, not to the good and well-conducted public houses—which everyone, even the hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth, will desire to keep alive—but to those public houses, of which there are a certain number, known as a common nuisance to the districts, although the Magistrates have not thought themselves in a position to withdraw the licences, or have thought that the offences were not sufficiently grave to warrant so extreme a punishment. I do not know what flaw there is in that argument; I do not know how to resist that contention. Anyone on the Government Bench who follows me will not, I hope, omit to show that our apprehensions on this ground are ill-founded, and that there is no fear of the operation of the Bill putting a premium on the misconduct of public houses for the purpose of attracting the showers of gold which are to descend on this interest in the extinction of licences. I venture to say that the community will before long be endowed with the power of dealing, through the instrumentality of Local Option, with the existence of public houses in particular districts; but I exclude for the moment all questions of mode of extinction. I look strictly at the present amount of evil with which we have to deal; and I am not speaking of the moral evil, but of the amount of the obstacle which we have to surmount. That is the enormous pecuniary value connected with these public houses. I look at the amount of that obstacle and the good that may be done under the present law. In my opinion, very great good can be done under the present law as long as you use it, as you ought to do, without delay. As the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) is so full of the evils of delay let him promote and accelerate the creation of an Elective Body to deal with this subject. There is considerable good to be done under the present law. There are great obstacles in its way. This present Bill paralyses entirely all hope of effecting good, and, at the same time, enormously magnifies the evil or obstacle before us by adding tens of millions, and probably scores of millions—and I believe scores of millions—to the already huge value of the mass of proprietary interests which have unfortunately come to be clustered around these houses. These, Sir, are the grounds, and I think that they are strong, broad, and clear, upon which we intend to vote against this Bill, and we vote against it believing that, while every judgment and voice on this side of the House is given in expression of a clear, conscientious conviction, there are many of the voices on the other side of the House, even if they form a majority, that are reluctant; many that betoken divided minds; many that have reference to a general loyalty to the Government, and not to the merits of the measure. Could we have a true poll in this House—aye or no—on the single and separate question whether this measure is good or bad, we on this side have not a doubt as to the result. Having said that and having made these objections, I admit frankly the great value of this measure to us as a Party. I am extremely reluctant—I am half ashamed, but I cannot help it—to draw Party gains from such a subject. But as to the existence of them, there cannot be a doubt. Opposing this Bill with all my heart and soul, as a political and public measure, and firmly convinced that it is a retrogressive step and one of the most fatal kind, I do not for a moment question that every candidate at a bye-election who goes to the country on the Liberal side will profit largely by your unfortunate persistence in this ill-conceived measure. I am compelled to accept that gift; though I would avoid it if I could. I would neutralise and destroy it even now by beseeching the Government, while there is yet time, to withdraw a measure with respect to which everyone is puzzled to know why in the world they ever introduced it, and with respect to which the President of the Local Government Board himself has explained that the confident expectations which they entertained of meeting, to a large extent, the views and desires of a vast body of their countrymen with whose intentions and aims they sympathised, have been miserably disappointed.

*(6.45.) THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): The right hon. Gentleman commenced his speech, Sir, by saying that he would not devote any time to analysing the consistency of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), interesting as such a discussion might prove. As I believe that both sides of the House are anxious to come to a Division on this subject—[*Opposition cries of* "No, no"]—I will not prolong my remarks to any great extent. Otherwise I might be tempted to say that there does attach very considerable interest to the question of the consistency of my right hon Friend the Member for Mid Lothian in this matter. I think that before I sit down I shall be able to prove that if there is this vast amount of capital embarked in this trade, which my right hon. Friend has now denounced and spoken of with such horror, there are few men in the country who are more responsible than my right hon. Friend, during the last 10 years, for the investment which has been made of such capital. For the right hon. Gentleman, in the clearest terms, has laid down on previous occasions doctrines of compensation which would have contributed far more to the increase in the value of all kinds of public house property than the present proposals of Her Majesty's Government could possibly do.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I have never spoken one word on that subject, except with reference to the supposition of Local Option and the total extinction of public houses under that system, which those who applied for licences could never foresee.

*MR. GOSCHEN: No person whatever has ever before been able to read that qualification into the utterances of my right hon. Friend. He has said that this interest has grown up under legislative sanction. He has spoken of it as a vested interest.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: What is the right hon. Gentleman's authority for those words? I am not prepared to admit them. I have never seen anything which would enable me to know whether I spoke such words or not.

*MR. GOSCHEN: Very well. I will quote some words of the right hon. Gentleman. Other words of his have been quoted by my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board in a previous speech, and I do not know that any hon. Members opposite have called special attention to them. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "Considering the legislative title they (the publicans) have acquired, and the recognition of their position in the proceedings of this House for a long series of years, they ought not to be placed at a disadvantage on account of the particular impression we may entertain in many cases but too justly—in relation to the mischiefs connected with the present licensing system, and the consumption of strong liquors as it is now carried on."

I wish particularly to draw the attention of the Committee to the words "legislative title." What is the meaning of "legislative title"?

MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg): The annual licence.

*MR. GOSCHEN: The legislative title to an annual licence! If these are the arguments of hon. Members opposite, if this is the way in which they speak of the legislative interest, I do not know to what point this argument has come. Let me emphasise the right hon. Gentleman's argument. The right hon. Gentleman said that the publicans ought not to be disturbed on account of the trade which they carried on. Then, why does the right hon. Gentleman to-night alter his tune? Other speeches can be quoted against the right hon. Gentleman. The speech in which the words "vested interests" occurred has been already quoted. Indeed, the speeches which he made in reference to the position of the publicans may be called "public house endowment" speeches with far more propriety than that term can be applied to the present measure of Her Majesty's Government.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Will you tell me where I said "vested interests."

*MR. GOSCHEN: It was quoted by my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board, and, therefore, I have not brought the quotation down with me. What I wish the House to understand is this—that not only the right hon. Gentleman, but all those who have been in a position of responsibility during the last 10 years, have held language which would entitle the publicans to believe that their licences could not be withdrawn without compensation. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, for example, delivered an address at Oxford.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): Can the right hon. Gentleman point to any speech in which I, as a Minister from that Bench, stated on the authority of the whole Government that there was any claim to compensation?

*MR. GOSCHEN: Perhaps, then, the right hon. Gentleman had changed his opinion. This is what he told the publicans on the occasion to which I refer, and there was a time when he was not so hostile to the interests of the publicans as he is at present. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "Some people want to meddle with the rights of the owners of public houses; others to invade the rights of the owners of private houses. The form is different, but the error is the same. Unless we set our faces against the whole system, liberty itself will suffer."

I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman sets his face against this invasion of the rights of the publicans.

Sir W. HARCOURT: What are their rights?

*MR. GOSCHEN: I suppose the right hon. Gentleman was not then alluding to the right of a publican to apply for an annual licence. Then there is a letter, published in 1880, from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley), who said—

> "I may add that I should strongly oppose any legislation which should overlook the fact that immense capital has been embarked in your trade, in the ordinary expectation that the trade would not be interfered with."

I do not know whether the views of Mr. John Bright will have any influence still with hon. Members opposite, but I will quote what he said at a time when he enjoyed the full confidence of right hon. Gentlemen opposite—

> "To shut up in Birmingham—I do not know how many persons there are in your trade (A voice: Two thousand)—if there are 2,000 houses, and there are, perhaps, no less than those in Liverpool and Manchester, it is impossible that you should shut up all those without compensation. It would be unjust if the populations of those places could, even by vote, shut up all those houses and turn those families into the streets. I say the thing is incredible, besides being unjust; and, therefore, I could not agree to a proposition of that kind. I should say that, whether the magistrates, whether the Corporation, or any elective Board or Authority of any sort that Parliament might substitute for the Authority which now exists, if it undertook to close those houses which are not closed on the ground of their infringement of the law, that in those cases, as a matter of course, fair compensation would be paid to those who were so dealt with."

I presume that hon. Members opposite wish to diminish the number of public houses. There are two ways of doing so, either by paying for them or by not paying for them. If their licences are taken away the publicans would be turned into the street, according to the doctrine of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman says that the magistrates have proceeded much too slowly in reducing the number of licences. If you diminish the number of public houses without any kind of compensation you will, in Mr. Bright's language, do what is incredible as well as unjust. We are for the first time introducing a measure which will enable the number of public houses to be reduced in substantial proportions, and we are entitled to say that we are acting upon principles which used to be accepted by right hon. Gentlemen opposite. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) just now expressed a doubt whether he ever used the words "vested interests." On March 5th, 1880, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "We ought not to allow our prejudices with regard to this particular trade, or our sense of the enormous mischiefs associated with its work, to cause us to deviate by one hair's breadth from the principle which Parliament has always acted upon in analogous cases, namely, that when a vested interest has been created the question of compensation should be considered when such vested interests are proposed to be dealt with by Parliament."

I trust the right hon. Gentleman will now acquit me of having in any way misquoted him or exaggerated the statement he has made. Now, the point between us is very small. Why is this Bill resisted to this fanatical extent? It is the first attempt that has been made for a great many years seriously to grapple with the number of licences in existence. The leader of the Opposition asks us why the Magistrates have not reduced the number before, as the County Councils are expected to do; but when he comes to speak of the County Councils he distrusts them equally with the Magistrates, and suggests that they will not do what the Magistrates have not done. Well, the Magistrates have not acted otherwise because they have been acquainted with the views held by leading politicians on both sides that they could not reduce the number, except by infringement of the law, without the payment of compensation. The Magistrates have been taught this by the right hon. Gentleman and his friends, and now, after this eloquent teaching from the right hon. Gentleman, because the Magistrates are not acting up to the more modern view, are they to be denounced, and told they are not doing their duty? We do not hold that they have not done their duty, but we admit that the reduction made in the number of public houses has not been as large as we could wish. We introduce the Bill because we desire to diminish the number of public houses. We have been told that the prevailing intemperance bears a proportion to the temptations offered by the large number of public houses, and we wish to diminish the temptations to drink. This principle was embodied in the Bill of the present Lord Aberdare, for which the right hon. Gentleman opposite was partly responsible. That is the motive of the Bill; we wish to reduce the number of licences, and it is a little unjust—and it is only part of a gigantic course of misrepresentation—to say the contrary. The Bill was even denounced before its provisions were known. ["No, no!"] Yes. Hon. Members who say "no" have perhaps not been favoured with such a correspondence as I have had. I received many hundred letters even before the Bill was printed protesting against principles which it did not contain. That is the sort of misrepresentation which has been made. We are anxious to diminish the number of licences; and it is really unjust that no notice has been taken of our proposal to forbid the issue of new licences. The right hon. Gentleman thinks we have been foolish in meddling with this question. But the right hon. Gentleman and his friends, who are now fighting for the first time under the banner of the hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth, notwithstanding their present feeling as to the iniquity of allowing so many licences to be issued, during the time they held office made no serious attempt to grapple with this evil. The right hon. Gentleman was too much afraid of the various interests that would be touched on all sides by any attempt to grapple with this question. It may have been foolish on our part, but we have attempted to grapple with it, and we intend to carry out our proposals, as we believe them to be in the true interest of temperance; and even if the result is to damage us as a Party, we think we shall have done in the cause of temperance something more than those who allowed these vested interests to grow up and yet took not the slightest step to put a stop to their growth.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear; 1871.

*MR. GOSCHEN: From 1871 to 1890 is 19 years. During that time the right hon. Gentleman has been in office many years. He has had many opportunities, but there were other purposes which he deemed far more important than dealing with this tremendous evil, which now we are not to be allowed to touch. The right hon. Gentleman challenged me on another point which I thought the strongest point of his case. The right hon. Gentleman thought the County Councils would take the wrong houses—houses that ought not to be bought; he distrusts the discretion of the County Councils; he considers that they will be open to such influences from outside that they will not wish to use this money at all; but almost in the same breath he says that if they use it at all they will buy out the wrong houses.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Bad houses.

*MR. GOSCHEN: If they are bad houses, does the right hon. Gentleman think they ought not to be stopped? [Several hon. MEMBERS: Not bought.] Exactly, that is my point. There is the discretion the County Council will exercise. Gentlemen on the Front Bench opposite do not seem to trust the County

Councils in this matter, but fear they will buy up or give an indemnity to houses the licences of which ought not to be renewed at all. The right hon. Gentleman scoffs at the idea that we leave the discretion of the Magistrates unfettered; but he did not attempt to argue that point and to prove his own case. The right hon. Gentleman dealt with the case of the publicans, and, alluding to a letter which he had received, thought that their particular interests would not be safe-guarded, but that only the big brewers and owners of houses would be dealt with. That is a misconception that has been raised in many quarters; but I can assure the Committee that the desire to secure the interests of the publicans inspired the particular words used in the Bill, which are that all who are interested in the licensed premises shall have their interests recognised. If it is not perfectly clear that the interests of the publican are safe-guarded, words must be introduced so as to make that part of the Bill thoroughly satisfactory. Personally, I consider that just as the owners of the houses have derived a certain equity from the renewal of licences from year to year, so those who have served in the houses have equally acquired an equitable interest, which ought to be taken into consideration in any new arrangement. One bugbear by which it has been attempted to frighten the country is, that the amount involved is two or three hundred millions, as the value of public houses would be enormously increased; but there is no force in the argument. What is the value of a calculation of what is the aggregate value of public houses as a whole, if nobody intends that the whole should be bought up? Neither the present Government or our successors have, or will have, any intention of the kind. No person in his senses ever dreams of such a consummation, not even the jovial prophet of the Temperance Party. What is the object of telling the country there are so many hundred millions at stake? It is in order to mislead public opinion. When the meeting was about to be held in Hyde Park, I saw notices calling upon the people to come in thousands to the Park to protest against "thumping additions to their rates." Now, who proposes any thumping addition to rates for this or any similar purpose? These are the misrepresentations by which public opinion is worked, and then hon. Members say, "Look at the attitude of the country!" The hon. Member for Barrow spoke of a meeting having been invaded by the organised friends of the licensed victuallers; but there has never been more complete organisation than that of the opposition to this Bill. The expenditure under it has been magnified. It has been said that licences would continue to be issued as at present, and in that way people have been deluded as to the effect of the Bill. The right hon. Member for Wolverhampton said that the introduction of the Bill had given additional value to shares in breweries; but I have before me a list of the prices of the shares in several large breweries on April 16 and at the present time. The right hon. Gentleman made his statement in perfect good faith to influence the judgment of the Committee; but what are the actual facts? The quotations for April 16 and the quotations now are the same. I need not go down the list—the Bristol Brewery, Hodgson's, Carter's, the Lion Brewery Company, in all the shares are now at the figure they were at on April 16. In the case of M'Ewans' Company there is a slight increase of 1 or 2 per cent., and so also in Messrs. Guinness' shares; but, if there had been a general increase, that increase would be as likely to be the consequence of an increase in the flourishing condition of trade as to any considerations in connection with this Bill. Messrs. Guinness have no "tied" houses. I am sorry to have detained the Committee on this point; but I wished to show hon. Members the necessity for examining all the statistics that are brought forward on this question. I hope that hon. Members will judge for themselves to what extent the allegations made against our measure are justified. As I have said, there is no case, within my recollection, in regard to which so many misrepresentations—so many organised misrepresentations—have been made against a measure as have been made against this one. I trust, however, that notwithstanding this we shall succeed, and that we shall be able to carry this measure into law.

*(7.15.) Mr. WADDY (on rising was interrupted with continued cries of "Divide!"): I desire to speak in quietness, and with that calmness with which a Debate of this kind should be conducted, and am ready to wait for the opportunity of doing so. A good deal of the argument on either side has consisted of the bandying about of well-worn *tu quoques*, and this with some hon. Members now seems to form the staple of debate. The course adopted seems to be for the Member who proposes to take part in a discussion to set one or more clerks at work to hunt up speeches on cognate subjects and to pick out certain things that may answer his purpose, and by reading these extracts at length to contribute a patchwork speech. I do not think I should have intervened in this discussion but for the fact that last night the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board read to the House a letter from a gentleman well-known to myself, of the name of Chubb. I may be repeating myself, but it is desirable that I should lay down, as I shall lay down whenever the performance is repeated, what is the fact and the truth with regard, not to this gentleman alone, but to everyone who is a member of the Church to which I have the privilege to belong. I have been in the House for many years, and it has been my duty on more than one occasion to refer to this subject. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), the junior Member for Leicester, other hon. Members, and myself, who was born and brought up in that Church, have as much right as anybody, if anybody has a right at all, to speak for members of that Church. But, Sir, no man has a right to do anything of the kind. If any man, be he a Member of the House or not, presumes or pretends to speak on behalf of that Church, he commits an impertinence. We have a distinct and definite way of representing our views; we do it by Committee of Privileges, and the statements of that Committee have been as strong as can be against the Bill. We do it in the legitimate Constitutional way, by the presentation of Petitions, and for days past the House has been flooded with Petitions against the Bill from all parts of the country. I challenge the Government to show one single Petition signed by Wesleyans in favour of this abominable Bill. I daresay I know more of the feeling and opinion in the Church than the Gentleman whose letter was read here last night. I support entirely what was stated last night by my right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton, that through the length and breadth of the country nine-tenths or more of our Members are indignantly opposed to this Bill, and even those who at the last General Election were led astray into becoming Liberal Unionists are returning to their true political position. For this reason I may thank the Government for the course they have adopted, and I hope other Members of my way of thinking may endorse what I have said. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said just now, "We have introduced this Bill because we wish to reduce the number of public houses." Now, I am justified in saying—the language must be Parliamentary, for the right hon. Gentleman used it himself—that that statement was made in order to mislead. If it be Parliamentary, I say that any statement made in the House, or anywhere else, that this Bill was introduced because the Government wish to reduce the number of public houses and promote the cause of temperance, is made in order to mislead, and that no man in his senses believes it. The Bill is to provide for a certain expenditure of money in a particular way, and this is justified because the money is raised in a particular way—by means of Excise. Has the money been raised by taxation fairly or unfairly? If it has been fairly raised it belongs to the nation as much as if you had put on a tax; but if it is unfairly raised, that taxation ought to be struck off at once. We have no right to continue unfair taxation on the one hand, and no right to deal unfairly with taxation that is raised fairly on the other. The excuse that the money is to be spent in a particular way because it is raised in a particular way is inadmissible. It is no more ear-marked for a particular purpose than an extra penny on the Income Tax. I have no wish to detain the House at length, because I know many Members desire to speak, but I wish to refer to a theory stated in the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and, in doing so, I will take

care to avoid other Amendments on the Paper. It is now urged boldly—for some time it was only put forward tentatively—that there really is a vested interest in a licence. Now, whether the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian used the expressions attributed to him or not, the mere quotation of words or phrases from a speech made in 1880 does not in the slightest degree affect us in 1890. Let us deal with the position as it is. It was said for a long time "We do not say that there is a vested interest," but now, in the most careful way, the admission is going to be made in this Bill, and in the new light we have it is about the most absurd addition to a Bill I have heard of since I have been a Member of the House. You are going to put in a clause to the effect that this Bill shall confer no more rights or powers beyond those now possessed, and you do not say what those rights and powers are. Why? Because the objection was that you were going to give vested interests that are not now possessed according to the decision of a Court of Law. You have no justification, and so with a straight face you are going to say nothing of the sort is to be done. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer urges there may be vested interests after all; if so, what is the meaning of the clause? I will confine myself strictly to the point, but I want to draw a contrast, which is instructive. We have heard a great deal lately of another country, not far away, where the people are said to have, not vested interests, but simply a sort of customary right. When we have complained that those people and their children have been turned out of the houses they had themselves built, we have been told that those people had no legal right, that they were told and knew that they were liable to be turned out, and that they should not have spent their money in building houses in face of this. We are told that these people ought to have kept themselves strictly within the law, and have governed their conduct by it. Now, apply that illustration to the case of the public house in the present matter. It is admitted that the publican has no legal right; but the Chancellor of the Exchequer turns round and says that, nevertheless, there is a custom, that we ought to be bound by that custom, and that we would never be wicked enough to turn out into the street people who have calculated upon that custom, and spent their money in the faith that it would be observed. Well, I wish that in the other case there had been a little of that same kind of spirit displayed. It is suggested that this is an important measure from other points of view. Now, I have received an intimation from the County Council of North Lincolnshire, a part of which is in the Division that I represent in this House, objecting to this Bill, and I believe that if we can only get the opinions of County Councils throughout the country an exactly similar opinion will be expressed by the great majority of the Councils. Although these bodies are composed, as we think, to an undue extent of the Tory element, yet as the County Councillors are not Members of this House, they are not bound to vote according to order, so as to save the life of the Government. I have also received a Petition against the Bill from the members of a Primrose League.

*(7.30.) THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I beg to move that the Question be now put.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think that an expectation has been formed as to the continuance of this Debate which it would be rather improper, without notice, to falsify. At the same time, I think it right to say that, in my opinion, the respect which should be paid to the rights of minorities must in every instance largely depend on the advantage which the Members of the minority take of the opportunities of discussion, and if, by hanging back and neglecting to offer themselves to take part in the Debate, they lose the opportunity, no complaint can be raised. I have observed on some occasions a neglect in this respect, and I think it most desirable that it should not be repeated in future. Certainly, if Members, Representative Members, do abstain in this way from offering themselves to the eye of the Chair, they will in future understand that they may altogether lose the opportunity of speaking.

(7.33.) MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith): The Government are greatly exercised because their measure has been called a public house endowment Bill.

But it seems to be their wish to create a statutory vested interest in the liquor traffic, and that we absolutely decline to recognise. You propose in your Bill to take public money for what we hold to be illegitimate purposes; money, too, which we desire to apply to the relief of urgent and pressing public wants. What is this but a public house endowment Bill? Licence holders, brewers, and publicans, are practically to have by this Bill fixity of tenure conferred upon them. If the owners of licences choose to retire from business, they will only do so on terms fixed by themselves, or by a Liquor Trust, into the hands of which the whole trade is likely to fall. I hold that this is a sort of endowment which will satisfy the most greedy pensioner of the State. The President of the Local Government Board said that this was not a final settlement of the question. I agree with him. I maintain that the Government proposals constitute no settlement of the question, and that the £350,000 allocated will be but as a drop in the bucket of compensation which will be needed. If you deal with this matter in a fair and square manner, you will need hundreds of millions for the purpose. The Government, under cover of this Bill, seek to figure as supporters of temperance. The extra duty on spirits and beer will, no doubt, be accepted as good on this side of the House, but, after all, that is merely a question of finance, and the burden will fall on the consumer. As to the question of the prohibition of the licences, that can be discussed on its own merits, and it certainly benefits present holders of licences to refuse applications for new licences. The liquor interest is placed by this Bill in an unassailable position. An enormous monopoly will be constituted by it, and this monopoly will be formed into a Trust, or ring, on the most approved American model, recognised and supported by the law of the land. I may say that, so far as Scotland is concerned, it is certain that if the Bill passes into law, it will remain a dead letter. In Scotland they hear much of a *plébiscite* as to the Church, but I should like to see a *plébiscite* taken as to compensation for the publican. The Government would not have a Representative returned on that principle. If the proposals of the Government are not understood now, they will be understood when the occasion arises to put them in force; and I trust that before long it will be the duty of another Government to reverse the policy which we are opposing, and intend to oppose by every means in our power.

*(7.45.) Mr. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth): The hon. Member for South Tyrone has twice stated in this House that when Mr. Bruce, now Lord Aberdare, brought forward his Licensing Bill in 1871, the Temperance Party were opposed to it. The hon. Member's words were:—"Mr. Bruce's proposals were scornfully rejected by the friends of temperance." I entirely deny the accuracy of this assertion—the Temperance Party did nothing of the kind. I will give one instance to the contrary within my personal knowledge. When Mr. Bruce's Bill was brought forward in 1871 the publicans and brewing interest convened a great meeting in Paradise Square, Sheffield, for the purpose of abusing the Bill. The Temperance Party took counsel together as to what course should be taken, and determined to move an amendment. They did me the honour of asking me to introduce it; it was seconded by another temperance man, and supported by the leader of the Temperance Party in Sheffield, who, since that time, has in two successive years been Mayor of the borough of Sheffield. The amendment which I moved was—

> "That this meeting, deeply impressed with the appalling ravages of intemperance, hails the introduction of the Government's Intoxicating Liquors Licensing Bill as an earnest effort to grapple with the gravest problem of our domestic legislation; and whilst this meeting cannot approve of all the provisions of that Bill, it rejoices that the Cabinet and Parliament are now pledged to accomplish one of the greatest and most urgent social reforms of the age."

Our amendment was distinctly in favour of the Bill, and for our action we were attacked on the platform, and my friend, who has since been Mayor of Sheffield, was obliged to escape by a back door under care of the police in order to avoid the new friends of the Member for South Tyrone. The same conduct on both sides was very common in other places. The hon. Member for Barrow convened a meeting in Liverpool, and was similarly opposed by the brewers and publicans. Indeed, a reference to the records of the United Kingdom Alliance will show that meetings were constantly being broken up by the friends of the publicans. The hon. Member for South Tyrone boasts that at that time, when he sat in that Gallery, he took some course distinguished by its wisdom; but I have conferred with other gentlemen who sat, and still sit, in that Gallery, and they do not agree, nor do I agree, with the hon. Member in his statement as to what took place. The President of the Local Government Board complained that many of the Petitions sent to him emanate from one source. Everybody knows that organisation in these matters is necessary. I hold in my hand a printed letter—50 copies of which, I believe, have been received by one Member of this House—purporting to come from a constituent, and asking me to support the Compensation Clauses, and to secure them being carried without amendment. One argument which has been used in favour of this Bill is that in the valuation of the effects of a deceased publican account is taken of the value of the licence beyond the period which it has to run. On the Second Reading of this Bill the President of the Local Government Board said—

> "It was sufficient for him to know that the value of the licence was taken upon the value for more than one year."

But four valuers, whose letters I have here, say they make no such allowance. One firm says—

> "We should not in valuing for probate the effects of a deceased publican include anything on account of the licence beyond the proportion of its cost to the next date of payment,"

and the others say the same. Now as to the "goodwill" in a licence as between one tenant and his successor. In a great majority of cases of tied houses, there is no goodwill whatever. In a number of applications for transfers of licences at Sheffield it transpired that none of the applicants had paid anything for the goodwill, with the exception of one, and in that case there was a grocer's shop attached. For that £50 was paid. The effect of the sum of money given for the purpose under this Bill will be very small, and in Sheffield it has been calculated that it will only get rid of eight public houses a year; whereas, without a penny being paid, the number of public houses there has been reduced by 78 in the 10 years from 1879 to 1889, in spite of the growth of population. From 1869 till 1879 the number of licences was only reduced by 32; in the next 10 years it was 78; and now that the case of "Sharp *v.* Wakefield" has been decided it is likely to go on at a greater rate. I wish to show the truth of what I have said about the Bill being for the benefit of the brewer, and not of the *bonâ fide* publican. Nine-tenths of the licensed houses in Sheffield are tied houses, the tenants of which the brewers can turn out at a short notice without compensation. I asked a publican if he could show me a copy of the agreement between the tenant of a tied house and his landlord; but he writes that it is quite impossible to obtain one, as they were not handed to the tenant, who merely had it read over to him, and signed it in the brewer's office. He adds—

> "Brewers, also, put people into houses without paying all the valuation, but they must find personal security for the balance and pay 5 per cent. per annum on the amount. The valuation always is fraudulent and fictitious. There are other brewers who require a bill of sale to be given for the balance owing for valuation. . . . The tenants will not be benefited one iota by the present Bill. It is only the public-house property owners and brewers that will receive the compensation money."

I have seen a copy of one of these agreements. The tenant is compelled, under a heavy penalty, to buy all his beer from one brewer; he is also made to take over all the fixtures, while if he commits any act likely to cause the loss of the licence, that immediately puts an end to the tenancy. Again, the brewer can bring to an end the tenancy if his tenant is censured by a Chairman of Quarter Sessions, or by any person in authority, for the commission or omission of any act forbidden in this agreement. In another agreement which I have seen, the brewer claims the right to distrain for the value of the beer supplied, in the same way as he could distrain for rent. We have heard the argument of respectable publicans being turned into the streets without compensation; but, as a matter of fact, the brewers have the publicans so tied up that they can and do turn them into the streets by means of the stringent provisions which they insert in their agreements with the occupiers of these tied houses. I repeat that the bulk of the houses in our district of the country are in this condition. The *bonâ fide* tenants will get nothing of the money unless material changes are introduced into this Bill. They cannot get any of the money, and it is not intended, I believe, that they should get any of the money. They are put forward to excite public compassion and sympathy, but the money will go to the brewers and distillers, who have grown rich upon the misery and degradation of the people, and of the occupiers of tied houses. I am bound to say that the strongest feeling exists in various parts of the country against these proposals. I have had to-day a letter from an intimate friend of mine, who, although a Liberal, is opposed to our Home Rule policy; yet he writes just as strongly on this matter as anybody can. He is one of many who do not usually agree with us who feel most strongly on this question. I hope we shall have the courage and perseverance to persist in our opposition to the Bill to the very last moment.

*(8.2.) Mr. R. A. ALLISON (Cumberland, Eskdale): Mr. Courtney, I must confess that it is matter for great regret and disappointment that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have passed over the recommendations now before the House, and treated them almost with contempt and derision. The President of the Local Government Board, no doubt, last night made a strong attempt to show that popular opinion was on his side; but all will agree that the attempt was a lamentable failure. Even the hon. Member for South Tyrone said he could not view these proposals with enthusiasm. I believe that is the prevailing opinion on the other side, although they will vote in the majority. I have observed, in several letters which have been addressed by hon. Members opposite to their constituents, that they wished the Government had left this matter alone. Even the hon. Baronet who represents the City of London wrote to the *Times* that it would have been much better to leave the question alone; but since it had been brought forward he, as a faithful follower, must support the Government. In times of difficulty like the present we naturally look in the *Times* for the letters of the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Howorth), and we have not been disappointed. It is noticeable that the hon. Member urged the Government at all hazards to pass this Licensing Bill at once, and thus prevent the agitation that will arise in every hamlet during the Recess if the question is left unsettled. That does not look as if Her Majesty's Government believe that this is a popular measure. I think the Government will find that this agitation will not go to sleep again, and even though we may be defeated in this House, we will carry the question from one point to another, and no doubt the Temperance Party will take a prominent part in fighting the County Council elections. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has taken hardly any notice of the proposal to devote this money to education—a proposition which, I venture to say, would be received with acclamation by the whole country. I remember how gladly we received the paltry sum of £5,000 for agricultural education a Session or two ago, and if that sum had been followed by a larger sum, as proposed in a previous Amendment, I believe it would have done much more for the good of the country than is likely to be done by these proposals. An hon. Member argued the other night that if this money were devoted to education a man would have to drink in order to educate his child. That is the precise proposal which the Government have made. Either we shall have to drink more or further taxation will have to be imposed upon liquor in order to carry out to the full extent the proposals of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer said he began to perceive symptoms of agitation even before his proposals were laid on the Table of the House. To that statement I can offer an emphatic contradiction. I know that the Organisation to which I belong, the United Kingdom Alliance, distinctly abstained from holding a meeting until they had the Bill in their hands. They held their meeting, studied the Bill, and then commenced the agitation. If there have been misrepresentations, certainly they have not been all on one side. The Chief

Secretary wrote a letter in which he stated that this Bill, at all events, prevented the issue of new licences. I think the same claim was made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It is absolutely untrue to say that. It does not prohibit the issue of new licences. It prevents the issue save in certain excepted conditions, and I venture to say those excepted conditions cover all cases in which licences are now granted. Why, all new licences would come under this clause. The hon. Member for Barrow gave the celebrated instance where a new licence was granted in the town of Bootle, where it was granted against the popular wish. I wish to say a word upon the second part of the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Grimsby, which says that no right or privilege is given to the holder of a licence other than that now enjoyed by him. But we know that at the present time, in the opinion of the Government, the publican has the right and privilege of having his licence taken away only on the ground of compensation. Would not that be brought forward in the case of the publican, whose licence was proposed to be taken away by the County Council? That would be a right or privilege now enjoyed, and for the purpose of which the Chancellor of the Exchequr has provided the funds. We have been told that no compensation is embodied in this Bill; but the speeches which have been addressed to us from the other side have been entirely upon compensation, and nothing else. The President of the Local Government Board last night said that compensation was pure justice. Therefore, the Government now consider that the publican has the right and privilege of compensation, and what is the use of the Amendment, which declares that he has no right or privilege save that which he now enjoys. I think, myself, that the whole of the system is founded upon fraud and misrepresentation. Let me point out how tied houses exist on a system of fraud and misrepresentation. A Brewing Company takes a house from the owner, and pays him £25 or £30 a year for it. He is put in as occupying tenant at a charge of £18 or £19 a year. That sum is entered on the rate book of the parish. That is a double fraud to to begin with. It is a fraud upon the ratepayers and a fraud upon the Inland Revenue, because if the real rent were made known, an increased Licence Duty would have to be paid. Yet these men, with their hands steeped in fraud, come forward for compensation. No more preposterous claim was ever made upon the British public. I think, myself, that they are entitled to no compensation. Something has been said, very plausibly, I confess, about Public Bodies having bought up public houses and paid compensation for goodwill. That is entirely a different case. It is the case of Public Bodies buying properties which they want to use for the purposes of public improvement. But in this case we are purchasing licences which we do not want to use, but which we wish to put down for the sake of the public morals—which is an entirely different case. Paying compensation for goodwill where a man's business premises were taken for a public improvement is totally different from the present case. This matter was discussed for many years in the United States, where the Supreme Court at Washington held, by a majority of seven Judges to two, that a brewer who had bought his business just before prohibition was enacted was not entitled to compensation from those who had prevented him carrying on his business. They held that the State had the power of prohibiting such a use by individuals of their property as would be prejudicial to the health and morals of society, and that persons so using their property had no right to compensation when prohibited from doing so. Well, Sir, we have had a very long Debate on this question, but I do not think it has been too long. I think that hon. Members opposite will hear a great deal more of the matter before the question is settled. We have been accused of obstruction; but the Government, who, at a time they have on their hands extensive measures for the pacification of Wales and Ireland, suddenly throw this burning question on the floor of the House, are the true obstructors. I am not at all sure that there is not a majority of the House behind the opposition to this Bill; but, at all events, its opponents mean to make it as difficult as possible to pass this noxious measure. The Government have beaten us on the previous stages, but it will not be so easy for them to do so in the shoals and quicksands of Committee; and if they succeed in doing so, the question will continue to be fought in the country, and in the end, I feel confident, the views of the Opposition will prevail.

*(8.20.) SIR R. LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.): With regard to a letter which the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brigg Division (Mr. Waddy) has alluded to as having been written by Sir G. Chubb, I may say that I happen to know something of Sir G. Chubb and his family, and I think the remarks of the hon. Gentleman were entirely unwarranted. The hon. Gentleman said Sir G. Chubb was not a representative man, and he thought fit to add remarks which, I think, were unworthy of him. Sir G. Chubb is one of the acknowledged leaders of the Wesleyan Body, and the grandson, or very nearly related, to that famous leader of the Wesleyans, Dr. Bunting. I quite admit there are some Wesleyans who object to the Bill, and some, I know, in my own constituency; but, on the other hand, I know of a considerable number of members of that body in my own constituency and elsewhere who are in favour of the Bill. Unquestionably, whatever else the Bill may do, it clearly must conduce to temperance, because it will extinguish a large number of licences which could not be extinguished by any other means. Indeed, I challenge hon. Members opposite to assert that this Bill will not tend very largely to reduce the temptations to drink which now exist in the country. It is admitted that there is a public necessity for dealing with the evils brought about by this traffic, and that a considerable number of licences ought to be extinguished; but it seems to me that they cannot be extinguished except by some such proposal as is contained in this Bill. Another reason why I give my adhesion to the Bill is that the money for the extinction of licences comes from the drink traffic. There has been a good deal of misrepresentation used by the opponents of the Bill, and one of the most flagrant instances of this is a card which has been circulated by one of the leading Organisations which is working in opposition to the Bill. It is addressed "To the Ratepayers of England," and goes on to say—"Are you prepared to pay a thundering big rate to endow the publicans?" That is not only nonsense, but most pernicious nonsense, for it misleads those who read it, and induces them to go to demonstrations against the Bill in the belief that if the Bill were passed their rates would be raised to endow the publicans. That, I say, is a misrepresentation of a very serious and flagrant character. I wish to speak of the demonstration in Hyde Park with respect. I went there myself, and admired the good conduct of the demonstrators. I may say that the inscriptions on some of the banners struck me as a little commercial in their tone, and as hardly referring accurately to this particular Bill. One of them, for instance, said, "Read the *Alliance News*. Price, 1d. weekly." I do not see that this had anything to do with the question of this Local Taxation Bill. There is another point to which I wish to call the attention of the Committee. I regretted to see that some of the demonstrationists displayed a spirit that I cannot help describing as vindictive against a class of our fellow-citizens, who, whatever be their failings, are carrying on a legal and legitimate trade. I have here a card on which occurs this curious rhyme—

> "No rates for bloated Bung,
> We'd sooner see him hung."

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): Was that on a banner?

*SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: It was on a card; but on many banners I myself saw similar sentiments displayed. I remember one very fine banner which bore the inscription: "Compensation to the publicans—not a bit of it." I could go with the demonstrators to a certain extent there, because this is not a question of compensation, but a question of extinction of licences by purchase for the purpose of promoting temperance. With reference to the vindictiveness to which I have referred, I would appeal to the hon. Member for the Brigg Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Waddy), if he were in his place, to say whether the question has been approached in a Christian spirit. I really do think that a proper spirit has not been displayed; and I would appeal to the Temperance Organisations to drop the excessive vindictiveness against classes which is sometimes displayed in these matters. The hon.

Member who spoke last referred to the publicans as men whose hands are steeped in fraud.

*MR. ALLISON: The brewers.

*SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: Well, either the brewers or the publicans.

*MR. ALLISON: I gave an instance of fraud.

*SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: Well, I presume that there is no class in this country of which it could not be said that one individual here and there had been guilty of fraud, but to say that, for that reason, the class as a class is guilty of fraud is grossly unjust. It is not the case that either the publicans or the brewers, as a class, are guilty of fraud. They form a class from which we have derived large revenues, and which we have recognised by our laws. I do think that the attempt to stigmatise classes in this way is an attempt which will recoil upon its authors. This method of extinguishing licences has been devised by the Government as an additional means of promoting temperance; and the right possessed by Magistrates at the present moment, with regard to houses which are conducted in a disorderly manner, or licences which are distinctly not for the good of the neighbourhood, is not prejudiced in the slightest degree by this Bill. (8.35.)

(9.10.) COLONEL NOLAN (Galway): I am not going to follow the hon. Member for Kensington (Sir R. Lethbridge) into a description of the banners carried in last Saturday's procession. No doubt a great many of the inscriptions were more humorous than logical. But the hon. Member's main argument was that the processionists and the Temperance Party have been falsely trying to persuade the British taxpayer that they have been taxed to compensate the publicans. There, I think, he was wrong. If, however, the Amendment of the hon. Member for Rotherham (Mr. A. Acland) is carried, the education rate will either be lessened or the people will be able to give their children a better education; while, if the money is spent in the way the Government suggest, the ratepayers may not have to pay the money directly, but they will lose it by an extra education tax, or on their children getting a worse education. But I approach this subject from the point of view of an Irish Member. This is purely the English part of the Bill; later on we shall come to the Irish part. Still, it is to a certain extent appropriate that we and the Scotch Members, whose constituents have to find the money for your Bill, should have a voice in the matter. The money we are now disposing of is wrung from the Irish and Scotch people by the tax on whisky: the tax on whisky is most extravagant, compared with the tax on alcohol on wine and beer. We are asked to decide how this money shall be spent. It is something like the case of the lady who asked the ducks whether they preferred to be boiled or roasted, and the ducks did not wish to be killed at all. I object altogether to the tax on whisky; but if it is levied, and I am asked how the money shall be spent, I prefer it to be spent on English education, instead of upon compensation under this Bill. Therefore, as an Irish Member, I am quite willing to vote for the Amendment of the hon. Member for Rotherham. But I look upon this subject from a different point of view than that of hon. Members on this side of the House who have spoken in the Debate. I do not profess to be an extreme temperance man, and I think that if you spend this £350,000 in the compensation of publicans you will injure the publicans themselves. Publicans will not be abolished altogether. No Liberal Government would dare to make any such proposition, and no Conservative Government dare make it without the accompaniment of compensation. As I have said, this compensation will do the publicans the greatest possible injury. £350,000 cannot compensate an interest which is valued at hundreds of millions. Men who have watched the proceedings of the House of Commons know how compensation generally works. Generally if the interests to be compensated are small they receive large compensation; but if the interests are large they get compensation to an infinitesimal degree, and that, I believe, will happen in this case. Again, if we appropriate this money in the manner suggested we shall injure the British public. In the first place, it is proposed that we should abolish a certain number of public houses. It is a very objectionable thing to prevent a man getting a glass of beer or whisky. But you are going to make him pay for the prevention, and therefore you injure him twice over. It seems to me, too, that under this Bill we shall have to go on compensating for ever. Suppose there are 40 public houses in a town and that 10 licences are abolished forthwith. The 30 houses which remain will rise in value. In five, six, or 10 years, unless there is a reaction in feeling, you will abolish 10 more houses, but they will have increased in value. As you go on with the abolition so will the value of the remaining houses rise in value, and you will always be giving the same compensation, even though you reduce the number of houses in number each year. I believe that some people drink too much alcohol, and that others drink too little. It would be an enormous advantage if we could get the consumption equalised, so that people would not take more than is good for them. It appears to me, however, that this Bill will rather tend to an irregularity in the consumption of drink by individuals. Public houses will be improved, and I have no doubt that, in some respects, they will be pleasant places in which to pass the evening. We are all bound to look after the public first, and when we see £350,000 being wasted instead of being applied to educational purposes we must protest against it. I object to this attempt to abolish public houses. I quite agree that no great harm would arise from stopping the issue of new licences, but I object to this attempt to make people sober by Act of Parliament.

*(9.21.) MR. J. C. STEVENSON (South Shields): It cannot be said that this Debate, however protracted, has been overdone. Indeed, the more the Debate is continued the more the Bill in its different aspects is seen through. I shall endeavour not to repeat arguments which have been already advanced, and to approach the matter in a manner in which I think any measure introduced by the Government should be approached. I do not see why the Bill should have been introduced at all. It is an insoluble mystery why the Government should have entered into this knotty and difficult subject, and especially have done so with a light heart. Why did you not leave the question alone? To that question I should be glad of an answer. It is said that this Bill is condemned by temperance advocates, although it stops the issue of new licences, except under certain conditions. One of the great evils of the present system is that people who happen to be lucky enough to obtain from magistrates a new licence immediately become possessed of a very valuable property. If the granting of a licence to a house gives the house an increased value, why should not the public get the benefit? Why should not licences be put up to public auction, and given to the highest bidder? The difficulty in which we are placed is that by the negligence of the State a licence, which ought only to be a permission, has become a property of value in the market. Here was an opportunity for the Government. If they had wished to take a step in the right direction, namely, of curing this anomalous system whereby a licence becomes a property, they might have done as Mr. Bruce did 19 years ago, that is, laid down the principle that a new licence should be bought by the licensee from the public, and that the value of the licence should become public property. We shall never settle this licensing question unless that principle is given effect to. Again, we are told that this is an instalment. What is it an instalment of? What is to follow? Not to tell us what is behind shows that the Government have not grasped the whole of this difficult problem as Mr. Bruce did in that statesmanlike measure of 1871, which, unfortunately, did not pass into law. It is said a great public improvement will be effected by the Bill. You can effect a great public improvement by the existing law. In the borough I have the honour to represent a great many old-fashioned public houses lost their trade, and became very miserable places. One licensing day we took away about 40 licences with a stroke of the pen, and not a penny of compensation was given. Some of the licence holders appealed to the Quarter Sessions at Durham, and a good many of the licences were renewed. But the Quarter Sessions refused to renew some of the licences. There was not a penny of compensation given. Why is this not done now? Because Quarter Sessions do not generally sustain the decision of the Local Magistrates. If the Quarter Sessions would do their duty you could effect an enormous public improvement

under the present law. I maintain that any Government attempting to touch this question should do away with the anomaly of a licence being a property. It was not so at first. The State regarded the trade as dangerous, and, in the interest of the Revenue, also public houses were licensed. What reason is that that the licence should become a property? As soon as the State saw that a licence was becoming a property, it ought to have interfered, and said—"If there is any property in a licence, that property belongs to the State." I am much indebted to the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) for reminding us of the history of Mr. Bruce's Bill. I welcomed most heartily the provisions of that Bill as a really statesmanlike attempt to settle the matter. The fact is, that Bill was too good to pass. It is 19 years since it was introduced, and if it had passed, the whole system of licensing could have been cleared away nearly twice over, and with a clean board we might have been enabled to make any provision we thought fit with regard to the question. Let me remind the Committee of what that Bill proposed to do. In some respects, I dare say, my hon. Friend (Sir W. Lawson) and his friends did not like it. It proposed that at the next renewal day every licence if renewed should be renewed not for one year but for 10 years, and that then all expectation of renewal should come to an end. I know extreme men of the Temperance Party said—"Why should we commit ourselves to a continuance of an accursed trade for 10 years, let an end be put to it at once." Well, we have waited 19 years since that time, and we are no nearer the desired end now. Licences were, supposing the holders conducted their business in a proper way, to be held for 10 years, and to absolutely come to an end, and the State was then to say what should be the proportion of licensed houses to population, and the limited number of licences should be sold, so that the State would have had complete control over the number of licenses, and there would have been an end to arbitrary or capricious action on the part of the Licensing Authorities. The hon. Baronet the Member for Manchester (Sir W. Houldsworth) the other day gave the Temperance Party a warning and said—"Do not repeat the mistake you made with Mr. Bruce's Bill which you rejected and have been sorry for since." If Mr. Bruce's Bill were before us we would welcome it for the principles I have mentioned contained in that statesmanlike measure. The hon. Member for South Tyrone has taken the same line, and says clearly a mistake was made in rejecting Mr. Bruce's measure. In that Bill there was nothing of compensation, which is an unpopular word, and is carefully avoided in the present Bill; but under Mr. Bruce's Bill licenses would have quietly expired by lapse of time, and this irritating point, the payment of public money to buy out interests, would not have arisen. The question naturally arises how many years absolute enjoyment of a licence should be granted instead of what, I think, has been correctly described as the certainty of a year's renewal and a speculative chance for the future. It was never, certainly, anticipated that Parliament would pass an Act bringing all licenses to an end at next renewal day. It is acknowledged there has always been the expectation of a renewal, and Mr. Bruce's Bill settled that the expectation should be converted into 10 years' enjoyment. Now, this was in the nature of a notice to the trade that something of the kind might be expected in the future, and that this was the best allowance they were likely to get. I do not commit myself absolutely to saying what should be the term of years, but it is right there should be a compromise of the kind, and the grand thing is it involves no payment of public money, but provides that at the end of a given term a vicious system shall come to an end, and Parliament shall be free to act. For a period of 10 years there are precedents in analogous cases. In 1867 our Foreign Office had correspondence with the French Government in reference to the unequal treatment of French and English shipping in French ports, and the Foreign Office called upon the French Government to put an end to this. In the course of a considerable correspondence the French Government represented that they had cause for complaint, inasmuch as in our ports there was a certain privileged class of citizens called freemen, who did not pay any duties at all, and they called upon our Government to put an end to this anomaly. So in the end our Government brought in and passed the Harbour Dues Exemption Abolition Bill. In the case of a Newcastle collier owner the abolition of the exemption amounted to a loss of £40 a year on each ship, so that on a fleet of 10 ships it meant a trade loss of £400 a year. How did Parliament deal with the case? An average was taken of the amount saved by the exemptions over three years, and Parliament said, "If you live so long we will allow you that amount of exemption for 10 years, and no longer. Now, that, you may say, was a case of confiscation. These traders were entitled to the exemption all their lives, yet Parliament, in the interest of International trade, thought proper to put an end to the privilege on the basis of a 10 years' compromise. Surely these persons had an infinitely stronger claim than the mere expectancy and probability of an annnal renewal of a licence. Then, again, in reference to the harbours of refuge at Bridlington and at Ramsgate a similar course was pursued, and when the privilege of exemption from tolls was abolished, those who enjoyed the privilege were allowed a 10 years' enjoyment before it was brought to an end. Yet another instance is furnished in the case of pilotage dues. Up to 1871 pilots had the right to charge double fees on foreign ships, but when, in 1861, Government put an end to the anomaly, pilots had to submit to an end of these double fees in 10 years, although the right was, undoubtedly, secured to them for their lives. Another case of Parliamentary interference with vested rights is supplied in connection with the town I represent, where Parliament stepped in and abolished a system of 21 years' leases with renewals that had become so much a certainty that 23 years' purchase was given for a 21 years' lease. Lessees who had devoted their capital to the construction of docks, quays, and warehouses, had to face the refusals of leases. Parliament in this case also compromised the matter by allowing a fixed period of possession in lieu of perpetual renewal. I mention these as analogous cases—which are yet not analogous, because the claims of the possessors of these privileges were infinitely stronger than mere expectancy in the case of licence holders—as indicating the lines upon which legislation should proceed, lines such as were laid down in Mr. Bruce's Bill. It would be far better to let things go on for some time longer, waiting until some Government shall come into office and approach this subject in a permanent and statesmanlike way.

*(9.40.) Mr. KELLY (Camberwell, N.): As it is not possible for me to vote for the Government proposal, I take this opportunity for a few remarks in explanation on the Amendment, as it involves the main principle of the whole Bill. When it is alleged that the Bill is brought forward in the interests of temperance I should like to know a little more of the circumstances under which the Government have embarked on the enterprise, and who it is that really claims the paternity of the Bill. I have not heard any Member of the Government speak of it as his child at all. If it is really brought forward to promote the cause of temperance a greater mistake was never made. I do not believe it is in the power of this House to strike a fatal blow at the cause of temperance, for I do not believe it is possible for anybody to do that, but it is a question whether a more disastrous blow could be struck at that cause than by this Bill becoming law. I notice that the President of the Local Government Board expressly stated yesterday that the Government have not, at any time, professed that this Bill could be considered in any proper sense as a proposal for the complete settlement of the liquor question. Then why make the proposal at all? I do not know if there exist conditions under which this vexed question can be settled. I do not lay the blame upon the President of the Local Government Board; I know that the blame lies at the door of the leaders of the Temperance Party. If they would make a fair and reasonable offer, the question could be settled without such a Bill as this. Even now, I ventnre to hope they may consider some alternative, which it rests with them to propose, for if this Bill passes, and remains operative, few of us will live to see any real reform in the way of temperance legislation. It is, I believe, quite possible to re-model the Bill in a way which would, in the lives of most of us, lead to a complete reform,

and give to the communities the power of controlling the whole of the public houses of the United Kingdom. It is said the Bill pledges the country to an expenditure of something like £200,000,000. [No, No! I do not care whether it is £200,000,000 or only £20,000,000; that is a question of degree in what I am bound to call the folly we are exhibiting. The real question is, Need we pay the publicans any compensation at all? I venture to think it would be easy to come to terms with the publicans, and get the public houses into our hands within a reasonable time, and without the payment of any compensation at all. Have the publicans, in fact, any sort of right to make such a claim, and have they ever made it? Well, I do not know that publicans have made any claim, other than that their property should not be recklessly confiscated. They say:—"We have been induced by the law to invest large sums in property of this character; and what we ask is, if you alter the law you should at least give us time to make other arrangements." I am not entitled to speak for them, but I think they would be satisfied with the continuance of their licences for 20 years. As the hon. Member for Shields has said, since the last proposal was made we have waited nearly 20 years for reform. May we not reasonably expect that we may have to wait another 20 years for the realisation of a reform now? If there is any force in that argument it is only common wisdom to meet the inevitable, and secure to the community the interest in licences at the end of that period of 20 years. This is a matter the leaders of the Temperance Party would do well to consider—I mean the possibility of an indefinite postponement of any settlement. I know no reason why publicans should not be thus fairly dealt with. I am astounded at the way I hear that body spoken of, not so much by hon. Members in this House, as elsewhere by the more rabid leaders of the Temperance Party. For a series of years publicans have carried on their trade under the conditions imposed upon them by the law, and have invested large capital in the expectation that their licences would be renewed year by year. I would call the attention of the hon. Member for Shields, who spoke of the number of licences refused in one small town, to the fact brought out by statistics put before us that only in the proportion of one house to 2,000 has a licence been refused renewal on the ground that it is not required in the neighbourhood. The chances, then, are 2,000 to one that if a publican has conducted his business properly, he will have his licence renewed.

MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.): In Great Britain?

*MR. KELLY: Yes. From the Returns furnished I find that is about the proportion. Now, what will be the effect of the present clause? The district which I represent would receive about £3,000 a year from the amount proposed to be allocated to London for the purpose proposed, and I need scarcely say that that is not sufficient for the purchase of even one large public house; I say that it would take 40 years to extinguish one quarter of the licensed houses in the district, with the sum of £120,000. It must be within the knowledge of every Member of the Committee that not one London public house in six is the property of the publican, and in not ten instances in a hundred have the publicans 10 years' interest in their occupation. I will venture to say that of the £120,000 which would be expended in extinguishing licences in Camberwell under this clause, £119,000 would go into the pockets of brewers and distillers, who have the deepest interest in this Bill. I do not know what claim they put forward. They have chosen to invest their money in a particular class of property, in order to promote the sale and manufacture of a particular article in which they have no monopoly, and I take it that, if they are sensible men, they will be satisfied with a 20 years' vested interest. I ask the Committee to consider how different the position would be if the Government, instead of bringing in this halting Bill, which will take 160 years to bring about an extinction which could be accomplished in 20 if the Government were not restrained by timidity, had brought in a Bill dealing equitably with the interests of publicans and of the general community. How much better would it be for all but the brewers and distillers. As it is, I am not quite sure that much is going to be done for anybody. I do not know in what final form this Bill may be passed, but, taking it as it stands, will it last for 40 years, or even 10 years? I do not think it will last for five years, and, inasmuch as it will be considered a Bill to secure the perpetuation of the rights of brewers and distillers, I think it will be followed by an Act for a general confiscation of the rights of the publicans. The Bill cannot be said to be likely to do much good, while it is likely to introduce further troubles and obstructions in the way of a final settlement. I am in the unfortunate position that I must vote for the Amendment of the hon. Member for Rotherham, because I believe the public will gain little or nothing under the Bill, and that while it may be intended to advance the cause of temperance, which we all have at heart, it will deal not a fatal, indeed, but still a most disastrous blow to that cause.

(9.52.) SIR H. SELWIN-IBBETSON (Essex, Epping): I am puzzled by much that has fallen from the hon. Member who has just spoken, puzzled because at one moment he seemed to be blessing the publicans altogether, and at the next moment to be cursing them from his inmost heart. The 20 years he proposes looks as if he does not agree in the views of the Temperance Party on the other side, and the adherence he expressed to the doctrine based upon the uncertainty of tenure by publicans looks as if, on the other hand, he agreed with the assertions made above the Gangway opposite. I have been mixed up, if I may use the expression, with this subject for many years, and one of the things that has astounded me more than anything else in this discussion is the change that has come over Members' minds in regard to this question. I remember when I first introduced a Bill in 1869, at that time beer houses with "off" licences were under the control of the Excise, not of the Magistrates. They were free from all police control, and the Excise were interested in granting the greatest possible number of licences, and my effort was to place them under the Magistrates and the control of the police. Mr. Bruce sent for me just before the time when my Bill was coming on for Second Reading, and put before me the proposals of the Government and four conditions which I felt forced to accept, and which practically gave to a large part of the trade that perpetual tenure which is now so much objected to on the other side. It was pointed out, and very properly argued, that even in regard to whole licences their actual legal position was that of holders of licences from year to year, and that is argued now. But people who use that argument forget the long-standing custom which has over-ridden the actual law—a custom which has been recognised by statesmen on both sides of the House on more than one occasion. In the Bill brought in under the auspices of Mr. Bruce, if Members will refer to the 44th section, I think they will find support for the argument I am trying to put before them. In that section a publican is not legally required to come before the Magistrates to make application for the renewal of his licence, and can only be obliged to appear personally to obtain renewal if he has misconducted himself, and opposition to renewal has, in consequence, been lodged against him. Surely, this is distinctly a point in favour of the position that custom has so far become a fact in regard to these licences that, having practically persuaded men to invest their money in them, it is not considered fair that they should be deprived of their licences, except for misconduct in carrying on their business. In my judgment, this Bill does go far to promote the cause of temperance. By the check to the issue of new licences and transfers the number of licences will be reduced in the near future. The tendency of the Bill, I venture to say, will be to put the trade into good hands. Good conduct will be promoted in the houses which remain, and in that way it will do more to carry out the views advocated by the Temperance Party than they would themselves succeed in doing in the coming generation by carrying out the violent crusade advocated by the advanced section of that Party.

*(9.58.) SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): The right hon. Baronet, than whom no one is better able to speak of the successive changes of the public mind on this question, and no one appreciates the efforts he has made in the cause of temperance, more than I do, has spoken with truth of the change in the public mind upon this great question during his time, and the reason, I think, is not far to seek. When he and I entered the House the liquor interest was enormously over-represented in Parliament, while the people who suffered from that interest were hardly represented at all. The change in the representation is the real cause of the change in the public mind. But, to whatever cause we ascribe it, the change has been immense. I do not congratulate the hon. Member for Camberwell (Mr. Kelly) on his independence, because I think this is a question upon which it is every man's duty to be independent, but I do congratulate him upon having thoroughly studied this subject, though some of his conclusions differ from mine. I agree with him that the passing of the Bill will be a disastrous blow to the aspirations and hopes of the Temperance Party, which have been growing for so many years. More than ever do we know that. Till the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer this evening, up to this time, in the Debates on this question, the downright defence of the publican's absolute vested right in his licence has been chiefly confined to hon. and learned Gentlemen, whose business it has been so often to argue the question before the Courts that they have, perhaps, forgotten its broader aspect. I am glad to say that many of my hon. and learned Friends have now taken a broader view. This evening, however, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has delivered a plain, unadulterated speech against the right of the nation to make reduction without compensation. That speech was nothing less than a blow struck straight at the present right of the Magistrates to take away licences at the annual Licensing Sessions. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer is right, what is the use of the Amendment of the right hon. Member for Grimsby, which has been accepted by the Government, and which provides that

> "Nothing in this Act shall be construed as altering the existing law affecting the renewal of licences, or giving the holder of any licence any right or privilege other than that which he now enjoys."

The speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is an absolute reply to those who charge us with having calumniated the Government by saying that this is a compensation Bill. It fully justifies the brewers and distillers, in their official organ, terming it an official recognition of compensation. This is the very worst compensation Bill which was ever brought before Parliament. The hon. Member for Cirencester has well illustrated that. Here is a village with six public houses—one of them, doing a business of £300, is bought up by the County Council. It is paid for on the basis of the net profits, which are represented by the difference between the gross receipts and the working expenses, and the profits also constitute the difference in value between a licensed house, and one without a licence. Well, the business of the house which is bought up is absorbed by the remaining five houses, the profits of which are consequently increased; so that if the County Council subsequently tries to buy them up it will have to pay, not merely for the amount of the business which they did at the time the first house was bought, but also they will have to pay over again for the business of the house which was first purchased, because it will have been added to the business of the remaining houses. And, as those houses will have their staff and working machinery in existence, what was gross profit to the extinguished house will be net profit to them, and their value will be raised very much beyond the value of the compensation given to the extinguished house. And so the process would continue with all six houses. I think that argument is absolutely unanswerable. What happens in a single locality will happen all over the country. If the liquor interest is worth £200,000,000, and if we spend £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 in buying up public houses, we shall have more than £200,000,000 still to buy up. It has been truly observed that this is a worse case than the case of the Sibylline books, for we shall not only have to buy up the books which remain, but shall also have to pay the price of all those which are destroyed. My right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian said this was a payment out of public money in a manner most improvident and most ruinous. It is, in fact, an elaborate arrangement for the nation to make a bad bargain; for the worst bargain which can be made is a bargain with several people. When one man has been settled with, No. 2 will step forward to take advantage of the position. Another reason why we have such an intense feeling against the Bill is, that it will open an immense field of jobbery for the benefit of the brewers. I was shocked to hear the other day that six or seven brewers had already obtained seats on one County Council, and we may be sure these Gentlemen have in anticipation the day when they will be able to induce the County Councils to buy up certain public houses, and thus increase the value of the remaining ones. Public houses are already falling into the hands of the large brewing companies. Take the case of Samuel Allsopp & Co. I will just read one sentence from the Report of the gentleman who was making the case for Allsopp's Brewery at a meeting reported in this morning's papers. No power on earth will convince me that Allsopp's brew bad beer. That is not the reason why the firm is not so prosperous as it might be. This is the explanation of the Chairman—

> "We have also considered the altered circumstances of the brewery business in regard to the tied trade, and we think it is necessary in the interests of the shareholders that the policy of tying houses, as regards this business but recently commenced, shall be continued and increased."

That means, what many of us knew long ago, that honest brewers who brew good beer, and try to sell it in the open market, can make little or nothing of it on account of the manner in which these houses are in the hands of people who do not appear before the Bench of Magistrates to get the licence. The Secretary of the Local Government Board is an admirable debater, and he rallied us on our feeling against the publicans. The truth is we are now beginning to understand the question of the liquor traffic in a way it has never been understood before. The pamphlet of Mr. James, the President of the Plymouth, Devonport, and Stonehouse Spirit, Wine, and Beer Trade Protection Society, gives us a perfect revelation on this question. It is one of the most striking pamphlets ever written, and any one who reads it will find that there has been existing in our midst a system of white slavery. He gives us striking instances of publicans who are in such a position that, in order to pay their rents and the interest on their mortgages, they have to conduct their houses under circumstances which no honest man or woman could possibly approve, and which, in many cases, are almost indescribable. It is bad enough for a man to have to do forced labour for the profits of others, but it is still worse when that labour consists in ruining innocent homes and in corrupting the morals of their fellows. I will just read one short story which will show what we mean when we say we are voting against the brewer and not against the publican. According to this pamphlet there stood within the limits of the Plymouth garrison a fully-licensed house, belonging to a brewery, and which in five years was let to no fewer than five different persons. Each of the first three on finding out the class of business he had been induced to take, got out as quickly as possible, a sadder and wiser, if not a richer man. The fourth determined somehow to make a living, and established a singing-room, which females of the class likely to visit such places were encouraged to frequent. The house was described as a horrible den of debauchery, and the police becoming aware of the character of the business warned the publican that if he did not alter his conduct the licence would be in jeopardy. The tenant left the house, and was succeeded by another person, but at the annual Licensing Session evidence was given of the disgraceful manner in which the business of the house was conducted, and the Magistrates refused to renew the licence. What was the result? An appeal was made to Quarter Sessions, ostensibly on behalf of the tenant, but really on behalf of the brewers, and the licence was renewed. Now, the owners of this house must have known perfectly well how the business was conducted, but they evidently did not care so long as the profits of their trade were increased to a considerable extent. It is the brewers we are really called on to compensate and not the publican. There are many, of whom I am one, who would willingly settle this question, giving the publican some sort of compensation for disturbance, but that would be to pledge the House to thousands and hundreds of thousands, whereas under this Bill we shall be pledged to millions and hundreds of millions. This is not a question of temperance fanatics. The great mass of the people of this country feel strongly. They do not see why monopolists, who have made so much money by their monopoly, should not only be allowed to keep their gains but should be paid their capital value as well. My own belief is that there has been no expression of public opinion in favour of this measure outside the House except from interested people. The right hon. gentleman read across the table a telegram stating that 2,000 people at Bridgeton-cross, in an open-air meeting, carried a resolution in favour of the Government proposals. Now, the open-air meeting was advertised by the Temperance Party. It came on to rain, and the meeting was held in a large hall, where resolutions were carried enthusiastically, and almost unanimously, against the Government proposals. Afterwards, when the weather had cleared up, the people went outside and again passed the same resolutions, but in the interval, while it was raining, some 20 or 30 people made some demonstration in favour of the Government, and that is all the ground upon which these leaders of the people telegraphed up to the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman quoted Liverpool as being in favour of the Bill. It may be so, because Liverpool is the most unhappy of all great cities in being the most publican ridden city probably in the world at this moment. It is a city where, under this odious and hateful system, the property has got into a very few hands—I might almost say into the hands of one man. I do not deny that much of the income obtained from it has been so used as to identify in Liverpool the liquor interest with ideas of magnificence and public spirit, and even of religion. But I feel certain that the public see through this thin veneering of public spirit on the part of these rich monopolists, not because they are temperance fanatics, but because they are citizens with a sense of equity—a sense of what is due to themselves and to their fellow citizens, and they are therefore heartily in sympathy with us in voting against these clauses which will give sanction and permanence to this indefensible privilege.

*(10.30.) MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport): This Amendment is a remarkable one; on its negative side, it goes to the root of the principle of the Bill; and on its positive side, it devotes £350,000 to the purposes of education, without the recommendation of a Minister of the Crown. The Debate is even more remarkable, for anyone coming into the House accidentally would imagine that we were engaged, if you were not in the Chair, on the Second Reading, for the discussion has wandered over every part of the Bill, and has chiefly turned on what is not in the Bill at all. While the Bill does not in any way whatever lead to depriving a man of his licence, with or without compensation, the whole Debate has turned upon the propriety of giving the man compensation who has been deprived of his licence. It has been contended that you have no right to compensate a man unless he has a legally vested interest. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian laid down distinctly that a publican—he evidently meant the wider statement, that a man—is not entitled to be compensated by reason of his suffering from a contingency which is existent under the law at the time when he enters upon his occupation. He takes the occupation subject to the risks attendant under the existing law. Therefore, the right hon. Gentleman laid down that he cannot be entitled to compensation. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman will not say that one law should be applied to the publican and brewer, and another to other men in a similar position. Therefore, the right hon. Gentleman's conclusion is based on the general premise that the publican should not be so compensated. But the right hon. Gentleman himself has set a remarkable precedent. In 1870 he took up the case of the Irish

tenant for the first time. Now, the Irish tenant was liable under the law, as it stood, to be dispossessed of his holding on six months' notice; he took his tenancy subject to that contingency; and, therefore, on the broad principle laid down by the right hon. Gentleman he could not be entitled to compensation if he were deprived of his holding by legal process. Nevertheless, the right hon. Gentleman, supported by a large number of hon. Members opposite, carried a law under which an Irish tenant thus dispossessed of his holding should receive compensation. Surely that was fatal to the principle he now lays down. Let us take another case—the abolition of purchase in the Army. There was a large number of officers in the Army who bought their commissions with the knowledge that those commissions were really for one year only, because unless the Mutiny Act be renewed every year—and it is quite within the discretion of Parliament to refuse to renew it—the Army would disappear and the commissions would be worthless. The officers bought those commissions, giving larger sums than the legal cost for them, subject to that contingency; but when the right hon. Gentleman put an end to the system of purchase he gave to those officers as compensation the illegal value of their commissions. With these precedents, which are surely on all fours with the present case, how can hon. Members, and least of all the right hon. Gentleman himself, now contend that those who are interested in public houses are not entitled to compensation if their occupation is taken from them through no fault of their own, because they hold only for the year, and the Magistrate has absolute discretion as to renewing. As regards "absolute discretion," that does not mean an arbitrary discretion; the discretion must be used judicially. I will now deal with the three points raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridgeton as well as I can. The right hon. Member for Bridgeton has said that under this Bill the County Councils would get nothing for their money, but that they would rather sustain a loss. The hon. Gentleman took the case of a village in which there were six public houses; the County Council bought one of them at which £300 a year was spent, and asking what would be the result to the other five, said the £300 would then be spent in them, and thus the value of the remaining houses would be increased. He further pointed out that the £300 would be spent in the remaining houses, the proprietors of which would not be required to engage extra servants to meet the extra demand; so that in their case the £300 would be a net profit, while it had been only a gross profit in the case of the house purchased. But the right hon. Gentleman protested too much. If the result of putting an end to one house is that the money spent in that house will be spent in the others that remain, what is the use of diminishing public houses at all? To do any good at all in the cause of temperance in that case it would be necessary to do away with every public house in the country. But is that feasible or desirable? I do not think the argument will commend itself to the senses of the House. The next argument of the right hon. Member was that the Bill is an elaborate arrangement for the County Councils, or the country through them, to make a bad bargain, because there are at least two or three persons interested in every public house, and when one has been bought out the others will be able to raise their prices. Well, there is scarcely any property whatever, either in London or out of it, in which several persons are not interested. The County Councils would, of course, engage good business men to carry out the work of purchase for them, and no business man would be guilty of the folly of dealing with any separate owner unconditionally. They would approach them as nearly as possible simultaneously. They would begin with the freeholder, or long leaseholder, and, having got the whip hand, they would be able to deal very shortly with the publican. If a publican takes a house and conducts it badly, the Magistrates do not refuse to renew the licence of the brewer, if he puts in a man to conduct it respectably. But the right hon. Gentleman says he would not compensate the brewer who built the house or valued the property; he would compensate the publican. But is a man who has so conducted his business as to jeopardise the property of another to be compensated? He is just the man that ought not to be compensated, and the suggestion that such a scoundrel should be compensated comes from the right hon. Gentleman himself, and is not to be found in this Bill. He complains that the Quarter Sessions have upset the decisions of the Local Licences Committee. That may be a good reason why we should alter the law with regard to Quarter Sessions; but it is no reason why a publican should not have the value of his property, if it is taken away from him, just as everybody else has under similar circumstances. When I hear these things said about property, I am reminded of what Macaulay wrote of the Puritans' dislike to bull baiting. He said they put an end to bull baiting not because they cared for the bull, but because they hated the Cavaliers who engaged in the sport. So in this instance, it seems to me, that opponents of the Bill are actuated more by hatred of the brewers than by love of the cause of temperance. This Bill is going to give a moderate sum of money year by year to County Councils to enable them to improve the moral aspect of our towns as they are now enabled to effect physical improvements. If the County Councils pull down property, including public houses, for the purpose of affecting street improvements, they have to give full compensation and 10 per cent. added. If they wish to get rid of a publican to improve the moral aspect of the town at present they are powerless. This Bill gives them the power and the money to make a fair bargain with the owner of a licence, and, of course, unless they can make a fair bargain, they will not deal with him. I know of a very strong case which occurred in a village of Scotland where the inhabitants of two towns on either side of it could go to drink on a Sunday. The people asked the Magistrates to get rid of it, but they were unwilling to deprive the owner of his means of living. ["Name."] I shall not give the name. I am giving the instance. The name is immaterial. I say that if these Magistrates could have given the man £100 to start some other kind of business; they would have been able to get rid of the house. You

may depend upon it, Sir, that there is a great deal of kindly feeling among people, even with regard to publicans, and they would be very loth to deprive a man of his livelihood without compensation. By the proposal of the Bill you would get rid of a considerable number of public houses which, though not bad enough to come under the censure of the Magistrates, are yet such as could be very well dispensed with. I will not detain the House. [*Cries of* "Go on."] As I am so earnestly desired, I will say one word more. It has been said by the right hon. Gentleman that if the County Councils included brewers it would be a very shocking thing, as if brewers were beyond the pale of humanity, and that it would only open the way to jobbery. For years the efforts and aspirations of the right hon. Gentleman have been devoted to the cause of Local Government, yet he cannot trust the County Councils because the people, who have a right to return whom they like, may return brewers, and that, therefore, these bodies cannot be trusted to prevent jobbery. They must not have this small sum, because they cannot use it in an honourable and upright manner. I have not the same distrust of County Councils as the right hon. Gentleman, and I have a great deal more faith in them than he has. I hope the House will carry this clause by a large majority.

(10.50.) SIR W. HARCOURT: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member who has just sat down has observed that this Debate has turned entirely upon the question of compensation. That is so, not merely upon this side, but on that side of the House. Every hon. Member who has defended this Bill has found it necessary to defend the principle of compensation. Even the Chancellor of the Exchequer founded his argument upon the propriety and necessity of compensation; if this measure has nothing to do with compensation, why should the right hon. Gentleman have thought it necessary to take up the cudgels for the principle of compensation? But then there is the great temperance authority, who is also a supporter of this Bill—the hon. Member for South Tyrone—who says that he will support the Bill, because he wishes to see the principle of equitable compensation affirmed. I agree with my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian that we need not trouble ourselves very much about the consistency of the hon. Member for South Tyrone. I will refer to some of the *tu quoques* of the Chancellor of the Exchequer directly. I am bound to say that when I see the Chancellor of the Exchequer rise, except with his Budget, I know that four-fifths of his speech will be founded on that convincing argument the *tu quoque*, and he has become such a master of that argument that he scarcely employs any other weapon. As to the hon. Member for South Tyrone, my hon. Friend the Member for the Cockermouth Division quoted his speech of two years ago denouncing the wickedness of the Bill of 1888; but that Bill was also, I presume, a Bill for equitable compensation. I am quite sure that he would not deceive his friends and allies by introducing a Bill for any compensation if it was not equitable. Why the hon. Member thought it necessary to oppose so vehemently the Bill of 1888, and to support with equal fervour the Bill of 1890, they both being Bills providing for equitable compensation, I am unable to understand or explain. But that, after all, is not a matter of very great consequence. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has thought fit to make an attack upon the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian and also upon a much more humble individual, myself; and he stated, as other hon. Members opposite up and down the country have stated, that I have made speeches in favour of compensation. But one thing I have remarked, that none of those hon. Members have quoted a single line from any of my speeches in favour of compensation. I have never learned the law as it has been laid down by the present Law Officers of the Crown. I have always understood the law to be—and I took it seven years ago upon the authority of the then Law Officers of the Crown—as it was laid down in the case of "Sharp *v.* Wakefield," and I then stated, speaking for the Government of that day, and standing where the Chancellor of the Exchequer stood when he charged me with maintaining the principle of compensation, that no case had been made out for giving compensation on the extinction of licences. There is my answer to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's *tu quoque.* As far as I can recollect, I defy the right hon. Gentleman to show that I have ever said anything inconsistent with that statement. I am not going on the present occasion to enter into the details of this Bill, which have been very fully discussed; but I think that it will be of some little interest to speculate and to conjecture as to the real origin of this Bill. I confess that throughout these discussions I have felt a certain sympathy for the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board for having the conduct of this Bill. I confess I do not attribute the origin of this Bill to the right hon. Gentleman. I have always observed a sort of popular fibre about him which has always led me to feel that he is a Liberal accidentally gone astray. Therefore, I do not attribute the origin of this Bill to the right hon. Gentleman. I think it originated in a more ingenious and subtle brain, and I should attribute the origin of it rather to the right hon. Gentleman who sits near him, and who I should describe as an accidental Liberal, who has now returned to his natural fold. But the right hon. Gentleman has entered that fold as a sort of Sinon, and he has landed in the middle of the Tory camp a wooden horse, which his Colleagues will find to be rather a troublesome gift brought to them by the perfidious Greek. This Bill appears to me to be a sort of a thoroughly Liberal Unionist scheme, and what I mean by that is that it is not a Liberal scheme, and not a Tory scheme, but that it is a Liberal Unionist scheme, which pretends to be one thing and actually is another; and I do not know anyone more likely to have invented and perfected a scheme of that kind than the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. No doubt it has been devised for the purpose of aiding the cause of temperance. But it is so devised that, in the opinion of all who have studied the temperance question, it will produce exactly the opposite effect. But if the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer is too modest to assume to himself the whole credit of this plan, I daresay he may have been assisted also by his fertile and ingenious Colleague who generally sits on these Benches—I mean the right hon. Member for Birmingham. My right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham has so many plans I think it possible this may be another. Then, in order to complete the system, there is always the hon. Member for South Tyrone, who is ready to be godfather to this or to any other misbegotten progeny. I think, then, that I have attributed the origin of this Bill to the proper quarter. I think that we should be rather interested to know what that combination has determined in secret conclave to-day as to its future course. We have heard of one meeting which had a disastrous result, and now there has been another meeting to determine what those who were present at the first meeting shall do at the third meeting. That my contention was not altogether unfounded has been proved by the statement to-night that the Government are prepared to amend their Bill, and are going to accept an Amendment, and that Amendment comes from the Gentleman who sits at the end of this Bench—another illustrious genius — my right hon. Friend the Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage). He is the only person equal to the task of amending the Bill. It happens that one of the chief questions under discussion in this Bill is whether or not the proposals of the Government will interfere with the jurisdiction of the Magistrates, or, if they do not interfere with it legally, whether they will so operate as to give a claim to licensed houses which, in fact, they do not at present possess. Well, Sir, there were several Amendments to meet that on this Paper. There was an Amendment which I took the liberty of putting down. I will say nothing about that. But there was the Amendment put down by the hon. Baronet opposite, the Member for one of the Divisions of Manchester (Sir W. Houldsworth), who speaks in this House as a representative of the Church of England Temperance Society. That is an Amendment which, if any Amendment were of avail at all, certainly declares that—

> "Nothing in this Act, or any agreement made thereunder, shall be deemed to recognise any right or claim of any person to receive compensation."

Sir W. Harcourt

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Lancashire, N.E., Darwen): I rise to order. I wish to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is speaking to the Question?

THE CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman is garnishing the subject, but he is not out of order.

SIR W. HARCOURT: It is a subject that requires some garnishing, I think, although the noble Lord does not seem to like the sauce with which I am dressing it. Now, I venture to say that what I am about to observe is perfectly germane to what the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill has said. He referred to the Amendment of my right hon. Friend on this Bench as the Amendment which was to give security against the fears we entertain of the consequences of this Bill. I may say that there was an Amendment in strong, plain, definite terms on this subject put down by the hon. Baronet the Member for Manchester (Sir W. Houldsworth) as showing the arguments of the Church of England Temperance Society, and that Amendment the Government have rejected.

*MR. RITCHIE: What right has the right hon. Gentleman to say that?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I will tell the right hon. Gentleman why I say they have rejected it. They cannot accept two Amendments on the very same subject; if they accept the Amendment of my right hon. Friend the Member for Grimsby, they cannot accept the Amendment of the hon. Baronet opposite.

*MR. RITCHIE: The Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Grimsby was the first Amendment on the subject on the Paper, and it seemed to the Government fully to carry out the intention of my hon. Friend behind me, of whom the right hon. Gentleman has spoken; but if the Amendment of my hon. Friend will reconcile the right hon. Gentleman to the Bill, I think there will be no difficulty in our accepting it.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I am delighted that I am going to rob my right hon. Friend of the honour of amending the Government proposal. I have taken the precaution, as the right hon. Gentleman will see on the Paper, of amending my right hon. Friend's Amendment by striking out his words and putting in the words of the hon. Baronet the

Member for Manchester. I am very glad, therefore, to hear that we have got rid of the weak liquor of my right hon. Friend, and that we have made a little better blend of it. So far, so good. Well, now, a great deal has been said upon a matter which is of great importance—upon the operation of this Bill as it will affect the brewer and the publican. That is a very material question. The right hon. Gentleman has expressed an intention of making provision for the publican as distinguished from the brewer; but I think it is a very great pity, if he intends to do that, that he has put down no Amendment on the Paper. Gentlemen opposite complain of the length to which these Debates go; but, surely, if the Government wish to shorten them, they should put upon the Paper those Amendments which they intend to press by argument. I got a letter the other day upon a case, which is not an imaginary case such as the hon. Member who has just sat down has spoken of. There was a woman who kept a small free public house. The owner sold it to the brewer, who gave a considerable sum for it. The whole of the money was divided between the brewer and the owner, and the woman who kept the house was turned out and got no compensation. If the brewer and the owner give no compensation to their tenant, it seems to me that they are the last persons in the world who ought to set up a claim to this compensation. With reference to this Bill, I complain of the conduct of the Government in this respect. They complain that we are wasting time over this Bill. Well, Sir, I am very sorry that we are spending time over it; I would much rather have spent time over other Bills which were mentioned in the Queen's Speech. The hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), in a lucid interval of indignation against the Government, asked the other day whether it was intended to proceed with Bills not mentioned in the Queen's Speech before Bills which were mentioned. I would much rather we were discussing the Employers' Liability Bill, or a Bill relating to the public health of the Metropolis, or to the dwellings of the working classes, or Friendly Societies. All these were in the Queen's Speech, and yet here we are discussing a Bill sprung upon us in a Supplementary Budget by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Government complain of the opposition we are offering to this Bill. They have received counsel from outside that they should force this Bill through the House by means of the Closure and all other available resources. I am bound to say to the best of their ability they have followed that advice. Night after night and time after time we have seen the leader of the House getting up to move the Closure, and he has been met by the rebuke—the deserved rebuke of the Speaker or the Chairman. ["No, no!"] It is no use to deny it, because it is entered upon the Journals of the House. It has happened on former nights—it has happened to-night. What are the reasons that are given for rushing this Bill through the House? ["Oh!"] Yes, you have not succeeded, and you will not, but it is not for want of trying. The reasons given for forcing on this Bill and endeavouring it to get it out of the way have been most frankly and even cynically avowed. It is said that it is so unpopular that you must get rid of it as soon as possible. That is quite true in regard to its unpopularity. The right hon. Gentleman in charge of this Bill has read us some extracts from a newspaper. I will read an extract from the leading organ of the Liberal Unionist Party in the West of England, the *Western Morning News*. That organ of the Liberal Unionist Party says:—

> "It is becoming daily more evident that the details of the Bill, as it stands, are creating profound dissatisfaction. Liberal Unionists feel that they are especially responsible for the flagrant omissions and imperfections which characterise the Government measure. It is they who sustain the Government in office. It is they who will have the power at any future election to sway the fate of Parties. This sense of responsibility has prompted decided action. The temperance men of Devon and Cornwall are in arms against the measure as now framed. They believe it to be an honest but misguided attempt to deal with the liquor question. So manifest has this become that the executive of the Liberal Unionist Central Organisation for Devon and Cornwall have been impelled to adopt vigorous measures. They have represented to Lord Wolmer, and through him to the Government, that they cannot allow themselves to be made responsible for the Bill in its existing shape. They have urged the grafting into the measure of the modifications and amendments so well set forth

> by Mr. Powell Williams, Liberal Unionist Member for South Birmingham in a recent letter to the *Times*. They have pointed out that unless some proposals are adopted, or the Bill be withdrawn, the Liberal Unionists of the West will be so alienated as to endanger the cohesion of the Party."

Now, this is why I say it is extremely interesting to know what were the conclusions come to at the meeting held this afternoon on the subject of this Bill. This Liberal Unionist writer puts it in this way:—

> "It is possible that the Government might even force the Bill through Parliament, but they would do so at their peril. The next General Election, and any bye-election which may occur in the interval in the Western Counties would show that, in taking up such a position, they were disastrously misguided."

Well, on account of the unpopularity of this measure, it is thought extremely desirable that the Bill should be got through the House as soon as it possibly can be. I think it is a test measure, because if you can get your majority to swallow it, it is certain you can get them to swallow anything else. But Gentlemen opposite will, of course, consider their own policy and judge of their own interests. We also have to judge of the course we ought to pursue. We are determined to offer to the very end every resistance which the law of Parliament allows us. You are determined to press it on. We are determined to oppose it. You will try on the Closure over and over again, as you have tried already. But in our opinion, in employing such methods to pass such a Bill as this, you will only increase the indignation and disgust with which the country regards this measure and your conduct in forcing it on. We believe, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian has said, and as one of your own supporters has said, that this Bill strikes a fatal blow at the future hopes of temperance. You have heard the views of your own supporters—you have had a Balaam from Stepney, and the Member for North Camberwell (Mr. Kelly) has announced his intention of voting against the Bill. What independent support have you received for your measure? The right hon. Gentleman in charge of this Bill thought it necessary to parade such authorities as he could. I do not think he made much out of his Wesleyan friends. My right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) and my right hon. Friend the Member for the Brigg Division (Mr. Waddy) have disposed of those Wesleyan allies. You say that this measure is misunderstood. You say that it is condemned only by people who are ignorant of its true character. You may attribute to us that we are actuated by Party motives. You may attribute to the masses of the people who are collected together on this subject that some of them have not studied all the clauses of the Bill. That may be true, but can you pretend, or is there the smallest foundation for saying, that the non-political, the non-partisan advocates of the temperance cause are not overwhelmingly against you? I hold in my hand a letter written by Archdeacon Farrar. He is not an ignorant man. He is not a partisan. He is not a political man. The Under Secretary jeers at Archdeacon Farrar. I do not know what right he has to jeer.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. LONG, Wilts, Devizes): The right hon. Gentleman accuses me of jeering at Archdeacon Farrar. I did nothing of the kind. The right hon. Gentleman said that Archdeacon Farrar was not a political man, and I did smile at that remark. I certainly did not jeer at Archdeacon Farrar, for he is a man for whom I have always had a most unlimited respect.

SIR W. HARCOURT: All I can say, then, is that if the right hon. Gentleman has an unlimited respect for Archdeacon Farrar he will probably believe the statements in his letter. He begins by saying, "I dislike to meddle with questions which assume a political aspect." The letter is, we may say, prefaced by the declaration that he has never been actuated by political prejudice. What does he say on this subject? He says he adopts the phrase of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian, that this is a plan for "establishing and endowing" the liquor traffic, and then he says this of it, and I think it as good a definition as I have seen:—

> "And this will be done by a side wind. It will be done in an accidental and indirect way, which nevertheless involves a decisive recognition by Parliament of a bad principle, and which will perpetuate on our necks and the necks of our children's children a yoke which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear.

> And this, we are told, is a scheme devised to help those who are battling with intemperance. . . . . It is all very well for those who support these most deplorable proposals to declare that they leave the principle of compensation untouched for future decision. They may rail at our ignorance and obtuseness, and set it aside as due to the pig-headedness of 'temperance fanatics.' If such language amuses them, let them indulge in it. But let them remember that the supporters of the drink interest and their own most ardent defenders in the Press take exactly the same view of the meaning of these clauses as ourselves."

He then ends in this way:—

> "Is this, then, the time at which the nation should cease to make that trade more irresistible by helping to perpetuate the deadly fascination which it exerts over the weak and the miserable? Is this the time at which to pamper still further its bloated and ominous prosperity? Doubtless the Government may use its Parliamentary majority to pass these obnoxious clauses; but history has taught us that there are some victories which are more disastrous than defeats, and some defeats or withdrawals which are safer and more honourable than victories. If these clauses are passed in the teeth of the remonstrances of such multitudes of earnest temperance workers, who in this matter are guided by motives absolutely patriotic and disinterested,"——

—[*Ironical Ministerial cheers.*]—You deny that the motives of the temperance workers are patriotic and disinterested? ["No!"] What, then, is the meaning of your cheer?

> "it may, I think, be safely prophesied that the Conservative hopes of return to power after the dissolution of this Parliament will hang upon a spider's thread."

The Under Secretary says he has a great respect for Archdeacon Farrar, therefore I am sure he will be glad to have heard his sentiments on this matter. Sir, I adopt those sentiments, every word of them. Those are the sentiments and principles which animate the opponents of this Bill. Holding those sentiments, believing them to be well founded, you may depend upon it that to the end we shall, by every means in our power, resist and endeavour to defeat this Bill. We believe, nay, we are confident, that, in doing so, we have the support of the great mrjority of this nation. We accept the issue you have joined upon this matter. You may overpower us by your majority to-day; but you may depend upon it that in the appeal which must, sooner or later, be made to the judgment of this country, you will receive its final condemnation.

*(11.28.) THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I confess it is somewhat disappointing to say a word after such a speech as we have heard from the right hon. Gentleman. In the course of that speech the right hon. Gentleman has not advanced one single argument in support of the Amendment before the Committee. His speech is, no doubt, an excellent indication of the kind of opposition which he has twice over told us is going to be presented to the passage of this Bill. By every means in their power the passage of the Bill is going to be opposed by hon. Gentlemen opposite. Well, Sir, if that means that time is to be wasted ["No, no"]—as effectively wasted—by those who support the right hon. Gentleman as it has been wasted by himself during the last half-hour, I think there will be a very large majority of Members who will think that the time for putting on the Closure will very soon arrive. [*Cries of* "Order!"] Having ventured, with all respect, to remind the House of the character of the speech to which we have just listened, I should like to say a word with reference to the observation he made to the effect that the Chancellor of the Exchequer indulged in nothing but what the right hon. Gentleman called *tu quoque*. Those who heard and those who read that speech will judge whether the criticism is a just one. I confess I am always amused at the querulous tone in which the right hon. Gentleman speaks of the subject of *tu quoque*. I feel that when his epitaph comes to be written I should put it in five words "Consistency, thy name is Harcourt." I will tell the right hon. Gentleman why he objects to *tu quoque*. If he can find out that some Member of the Government is not quite of the same mind that he was two or three years ago, he thinks it quite fair argument to quote some speech against him.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I have not quoted any speech.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I am not referring only to the present occasion. But if any one quotes a speech of the right hon. Gentleman himself, or of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, it is a different matter altogether, and the opinion they expressed a short time ago is altogether an accident. I will ask the House to note the difference between the speech to which they have just listened, and that of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. Whatever may be said of the utterances of the right hon. Member for Derby, I do not suppose that the followers of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian will suggest that everything he has said on this subject during the last 10 or 15 years is to pass for nothing. There have been made by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, and by Members speaking with his sanction and concurrence, and by advocates of the Party entitled to great respect, utterances, some of which were referred to by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which amount to this—that the trade we propose to deal with by this Bill has been told, over and over again, that their business is being carried on under legal sanction, and such speeches and statements have been made by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, not hastily, not for the purpose of occupying time, but with the view of indicating a definite and distinct policy, statements under the sanction of which has grown up a trade on the strength of which capital has been spent which ought to be respected. I put it as a practical question to hon. Members opposite, who desire to approach the question fairly, and not in the spirit of the speech we have just listened to—Are you prepared to close every public house? Is it within the range of practical politics that any scheme should be entertained for closing all public houses? The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) would say it would be absurd to introduce a Bill for that purpose. Such a proposal could be made only by those who are looking forward to some Utopia, and it could not possibly receive legislative sanction. If once you recognise you cannot close all public houses it is absolutely necessary that in any scheme you should abstain from doing injustice to those whose business is taken away, while taking care that you do not raise the cost of acquiring the public houses that remain. Any scheme for reducing the number of licences, subject to those conditions, must approach this question from the standpoint taken by the Government in this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman has repeated the statement that the law of the subject, as now laid down by the Law Advisers of the Crown, is different from the law received from those officers seven years ago. I am utterly unaware of any difference between past and present Law Advisers on this particular question. I have never stated my opinion on this matter in the House before, and I now say most distinctly that the case of "Sharp *v.* Wakefield" was decided upon special and particular grounds, upon which, if ever that case comes to be argued in the House of Lords, it must be decided in the same way; and I say it is no authority whatever upon the question of what would be the duty of the Magistrates if they called upon a person who was entitled to the renewal of a licence to come before them and thought fit to refuse the renewal of the licence. [*Opposition cheers.*] Hon. Gentleman may cheer, but I am not giving an expression of opinion simply for the purpose of endeavouring to gain an advantage in argument.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Of course everybody knows the Magistrate must call the applicant before them.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: The right hon. Gentleman forgets that in nine cases out of ten, if not in 99 out of 100, the licences are renewed without the holders or applicants being called upon to appear, and without there being any power in the Magistrates to call them before them. I am dealing with the question as a matter of practical experience. I freely admit, and I have never said anything to the contrary, that the Magistrates, having before them the applicant for a licence, are entitled to exercise a discretion as to whether it should be renewed; and that discretion, if exercised on proper grounds, is absolute. I have not stated anything contrary to that at any time or place; but if the Magistrates decline to renew the licence simply on the ground that there are too many licences in the neighbourhood, they are not exercising a judicial discretion, and they would not be warranted by their position in arriving at such a conclusion. The right hon. Member may shake his head, but I am bound to state my view that if ever that question comes to be examined, the Courts of Law will not support the Magistrates who take that position. I am well aware that there are *obiter dicta* in "Sharp *v.* Wakefield" which may be thought to point to a contrary conclusion; but the case was decided with reference to a particular fact, and the decision was not intended to lay down any general principle of any kind. I rose for the purpose of pointing out that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby afforded no argument which ought to induce the Committee to support the Amendment. That speech contained many graceful flowers of oratory, which, however interesting to hear, did not add much to the enlightenment of the Committee. Treating the proposals of the Government as they are entitled to be treated—as a straightforward and honest attempt to deal with this question on a basis of equity and justice—I submit that the Amendment ought to be rejected by a large majority.

(11.40.) Mr. RITCHIE rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes 279; Noes 238.—(Div. List, No. 133.)

Question put accordingly, "That the words '(ii.) The sum of three hundred and fifty thousand pounds shall be applied for such extinction of licences in England' stand part of the Clause."

(11.54.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 275; Noes 243.—(Div. List, No. 134.)

It being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Is this Bill to be the first Order on Monday?

MR. GOSCHEN: Yes.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I wish to ask whether, after this extremely significant Division, the right hon. Gentleman intends to persevere with this clause?

SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): Do the Government intend to proceed with the Bill day after day?

MR. GOSCHEN: The hon. Baronet will remember the declarations made by the Leader of the House, and to those declarations we, of course, adhere.

PAUPER LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND) (OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION) BILL.—(No. 140.)

Bill considered in Committee

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Wednesday next.

MOTION.

POST OFFICE MAIL CONTRACT (EAST COAST OF AFRICA, ZANZIBAR).

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the contract with the British India Steam Navigation Company, dated February 5, 1890, for the conveyance of mails between London and the East Coast of Africa (Zanzibar) be approved."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY: Before the House agrees to this, I think we may ask that some explanation should be given.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): This matter was before the House in Committee of Supply. The contract is to provide a subsidy of £16,000 a year for steamers running to Zanzibar. The German Government have given a subsidy of £45,000 to their line of steamers, and considering the great interests of this country in that part of the world, it is very necessary that the steam service should be maintained. The origin of the service was in connection with the suppression of the slave trade, and our commercial interests in that part of the world have vastly increased. The whole matter was fully debated in Committee of Supply, and I hope the House will now sanction the contract, which is, I think, upon commercial terms. The rate of speed is not excessive, but the means of communication so necessary for our interests will be maintained.

MR. CONYBEARE: I do not wish to impose any formidable obstacle, but I have not seen the contract, and the right hon. Gentleman has not told us what is in it.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): It has been before the House for three weeks.

MR. CONYBEARE: But the Motion appears for the first time to-day.

MR. JACKSON: No; it appeared last Friday.

MR. CONYBEARE: I want to ask, in the first place, whether the contract was accepted with the British India Steam Navigation Company upon open tender?

MR. JACKSON: Yes, Sir.

MR. CONYBEARE: The right hon. Gentleman tells us the rate of speed of these vessels is not great. That is an important consideration, and, unless we have some more satisfactory assurance, I shall consider it my duty to oppose the taking of this matter to-night. The right hon. Gentleman has referred to the necessity of competing with Germany in this matter of steam communication between this country and Zanzibar, but if we have a good service it is desirable that the rate of speed should be something better than obtains in the services in the Eastern seas. The P. and O. steamers are not required to do more than 12½ knots, and I have had experience of the slow rate in the Brindisi and Bombay service. Yet in the Indian Ocean, as is well known, there is not the stormy weather Atlantic liners have to contend against, and they can do 16 or 17 knots. Then I ask for some information as to the minimum time of steaming fixed in this contract, the length of the contract, and whether the mails will be despatched weekly, fortnightly, or monthly.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): If the contract is sanctioned by this House, will it be binding on the Department, or may it afterwards be over-ridden in consequence of the decision of the Solicitor to the Treasury, as was done in a recent instance? I do not think the action of the House in sanctioning a contract ought to be over-ridden; it is reducing our proceedings to a mere farce.

(12.33.) DR. TANNER (Cork, Mid): I must protest most strongly against important business of this nature being taken at so late an hour of the night. I may say I was surprised to see the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs put up to speak on this question, seeing that he was recently appointed a Director of the Peninsular and Oriental Company. People who are interested in these questions should have nothing to say upon them. I beg to move, in the absence of a satisfactory explanation on the points raised, that the Debate be now adjourned.

(12.37.) MR. JACKSON: I am sorry to think that the hon. Member for Camborne has not had time to read the contract and the statement regarding it, issued by the Treasury some weeks ago. This Motion is not down for the first time to-day. It has been on the Paper since before the Recess, and it was down for last Friday. The minimum speed under the contract is 10 knots an hour. The hon. Member has referred to the fact that Atlantic steamers make high rates of speed, but it is not possible in hot climates to equal the speed of those vessels. Even if we could the cost would be so enormous that I do not think the House would sanction the charge in view of the small saving of time that would be effected. The hon. Member for Mid Cork has spoken of the connection of my right hon. Friend with the Peninsular and Oriental Company. But this company with which the contract is made may be considered a rival to the Peninsular and Oriental Company.

DR. TANNER: I merely said they were hand and glove.

MR. JACKSON: And my reply is that they are rivals in trade. As to the period of the contract, it was made last year, and at the time it was very difficult to decide the permanent policy of the Government with regard to speed and the frequency of the service. The contract is, therefore, made only for two years, and will expire next year. I can assure the hon. Member for the College Division of Glasgow, who has referred to an old grievance with reference to the action of the Treasury in the case of a former contract, that this contract will be adhered to in every particular if the House gives its sanction to it.

Question put, and agreed to.

House adjourned at a quarter
before One o'clock till
Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 16th June, 1890.

THE CENSUS—PETITION.

*Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH: My Lords, I have to present a Petition from the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the prayer of which states that the petitioners are desirous that the connection with different denominations of the people of Scotland should be definitely and authoritatively ascertained, and that this should be done in taking the next Census. I understand that this Petition is presented because in the course of certain recent events, importance has been attached by some people to the argument which may be deduced from there being a majority of those who adhere to one denomination rather than to another. Without expressing any opinion upon the validity or usefulness of that argument, I desire to say, on behalf of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, that their desire is that the exact state of matters, be it what it may, should be ascertained.

FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND) BILL.

A Bill to alter the constitution of the Fishery Board for Scotland; and to amend the law in regard to mussel fisheries in Scotland—was presented by the Lord Ker (*M. Lothian*); read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 121.)

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF CLARENCE AND AVONDALE.

The Marquess of Salisbury acquainted the House, by the Queen's command—

"That Her Majesty had been graciously pleased to issue Letters Patent, dated the 24th day of May, creating His Royal Highness Prince Albert Christian Edward Duke of Clarence and Avondale, whereby his said Royal Highness obtained a right to sit and vote among their Lordships in Parliament; and Her Majesty recommended it to the House to consider of the place his said Royal Highness should occupy in the House."

Ordered, That the matter with which the Marquess of Salisbury has acquainted the House, by Her Majesty's command, be referred to the consideration of the Lords Committees for Privileges; and that their Lordships do meet to take the same into consideration To-morrow at half-past Three o'clock, and do report their opinion thereupon to the House.

STANDING ORDERS.

The Earl of MORLEY: My Lords, I beg to move the Amendment which stand in my name of Standing Order No. 47. The object of the Amendment is that the noble Lord, who is in charge of any Bill, should *ex officio* be a Member of the Standing Committee to which that Bill is referred.

Moved, that Standing Order No. XLVII. be amended as follows:

Note.—The words underlined are to be omitted, and the words printed in *Italics* are to be inserted.

The Standing Committees shall consist in all of not more than one hundred and fifty Lords, and each Committee shall not consist of less than fifteen Lords, to be nominated by the Committee of Selection, who *The Lord in charge of a Bill committed to a Standing Committee shall be a member of the Committee during the consideration of such Bill. The Committee of Selection* shall have power to discharge Lords with their assent from time to time, and to appoint others in substitution for those discharged, *and* The Committee of Selection shall also have power to add not more than ten Lords to a Standing Committee, in respect of any Bill committed to a Standing Committee, to serve on the Committee during the consideration of such Bill.—(*The Earl of Morley.*)

On question, agreed to.

THE CENSUS OF 1891.

*The Earl of CAMPERDOWN: My Lords, as the time is now approaching very closely when arrangements must be made for the Census of 1891, I think it desirable to bring under your Lordships' notice a point with reference to the Census which has been raised on more than one previous occasion. I think it desirable, especially under present circumstances, with regard to which I have to say a word or two presently, that there should be in the Census papers for 1889 a column showing the religious persuasion of all the persons whose names are returned. I think that as this matter has been mixed up sometimes with ecclesiastical questions, it may be as well to say that I do not make the Motion after having conferred with the Representatives of any Church, or in the interests of any Church, or against the interests of any Church. I make this Motion as a Member of Parliament, and I regard the subject entirely and solely from a Parliamentary point of view. I may remind your Lordships of what has passed on previous occasions with regard to this matter. Similar Motions were made in 1860, in 1870, and in 1880. In 1860 Sir George Cornewall Lewis moved that a column be inserted in the Census Bill of that year in the sense of that which I now propose. It was opposed by Mr. Baines, speaking on behalf of the Nonconformists, and he used mainly two arguments. He said, in the first place, that the State had no right to ask a man what was his religious belief; and, he stated, in the second place, that any such Return would be unfair and inaccurate, because persons who were not attached to any special form of belief would, if asked, declare themselves members of the Established Church. The Government of the day were not at all convinced by that argument, but they did not press the point. There was a considerable difference of opinion, and Lord Palmerston, in closing the Debate and giving way on the subject, said that while they gave way to the feelings of the opponents of the proposal, they did not much appreciate the force of their arguments. But though, accordingly, no change was made at that time with regard to England, Wales, or Scotland, Mr. Cardwell, the then Chief Secretary for Ireland, assented to the introduction of such a column as that for which I am now asking your Lordships' sanction, and that was carried out in regard to Ireland. In 1870 Mr. Bruce stated, in answer to a question with regard to Scotland, that a religious column would be inserted in the Census Bill of that year for Scotland. The Free Church Assembly and the Established Church Assembly had both at that time petitioned in favour of such a clause being inserted; but some opposition arose afterwards in Scotland, and the clause was withdrawn. In the year 1880 the question was raised again, and after a similar discussion and similar arguments put forward the clause was once more withdrawn. Now, the Motion was resisted, as I have said, by the Nonconformists, and on the general grounds which I have stated. I am bound to say that, speaking merely for myself, I do not appreciate the force of the two arguments which I have mentioned; but, at the same time, I do not wish to regard this question from any narrow and far less from any sectarian point of view. I am perfectly ready to look at the matter as having different bearings, as I think those arguments have, when applied to the different countries. Now, my Lords, I am quite free to admit that in England there are considerable differences in the case as contrasted with Wales, and as contrasted with Scotland. In the first place, in England there are a very large number of religious denominations, of various kinds and of various strength, which differ very often from one another in very minute particulars, and with regard to which it might perhaps be difficult in some cases to make very accurate Returns. There may then be something—I do not think it is much, but still I am quite ready to admit that there may be something—in the statement that in England if persons who are not attached very strongly to any special form of religious denomination were asked this question they might declare themselves to be members of the Established Church. As I have said, there is something in that, but I do not think there is very much. But the strongest point of difference as it appears to me, when it refers to the Census of 1890, is that there is not likely to be, as far as one can see, any very important point raised with regard to the Church of England in a serious manner. My Lords, that is the reason why I think those who are opposed to this Motion may, on the present occasion, fairly say that they think great objections would be made to it in parts of England, and that they are not, as regards England, prepared to assent to it. But when we turn to Wales the case is entirely different. As your Lordships know, the Nonconformists in Wales possess a very large numerical majority—

at least I believe they are in a large numerical majority—as compared with the Church of England. I have seen it stated, and I am bound to say it appears to me to be a very strange statement, that the Established Church has in recent years been making considerable advances in Wales. That may or may not be so; all I say is, that I know no reason whatever, and I am very anxious to know whether there is any reason, for making such a statement as that. And, further, I do not see why, if this statement is incorrect, as it may be, the members of other religious denominations should object to any statistical Returns at all being made upon the subject, or how it can otherwise be proved that that statement is incorrect. But, with regard to Wales, your Lordships will remember that a very important announcement has been made by Mr. Gladstone as the head of the Liberal Party. He has announced that it will be part of the Liberal policy put forward at the next General Election to carry out the disestablishment of the Welsh Church. It appears to me, my Lords, that for that very reason Parliament is bound to obtain the best information which it is in its power to get. I am aware it has been argued that the Members of Parliament have the best means of gauging the religious opinions of Wales and also of other parts of the country. I admit that, to a certain extent, that may be so, but Members of Parliament are not elected upon one question, and upon one question only, and even when they are, I have known occasions on which statesmen have been able to argue that when you put the minorities in certain places in contrast with the majorities in other places, it by no means necessarily follows that the conclusion arrived at is the opinion of the majority, or, at all events, that it is more than the opinion of a small majority. My Lords, for that reason it appears to me that, whether this be true or not, it is desirable that you should also have this second form of information, which, I think, is the most reliable form of all, namely the religious opinions of people as stated by themselves. But when we come to Scotland, the case becomes very much stronger indeed. With regard to Scotland, a similar announcement has been made; and it has been declared, as your Lordships all know, that a prominent part of the policy of the Liberal Party will be the disestablishment of the Scottish Church. With regard to that I merely make one remark, in which I am sure that all your Lordships who have any connection or acquaintance with Scotland will entirely agree with me that no question could be put forward which will stir so deeply all the feelings of the people of Scotland as that question of the disestablishment of the Church. Well, that being so, and I believe it to be an undoubted fact, surely, my Lords, we ought to obtain, as far as we can, the very best information we can with regard to the various denominations of the Presbyterian Church. Now, I wish to press the question as regards Scotland most particularly upon your Lordships, because the arguments which I mentioned just now, and which I admit may have some force when applied to England, have no force at all when applied to Scotland. In the first place, every one belongs to some religious denomination. I am quite certain that the numbers of nondescripts in religion, as I may call them, are extremely small in Scotland. In the next place, the divisions between the various religious denominations, the lines of division, are very clearly marked out. You have the Roman Catholics, who include in their number the inhabitants of a small portion of the Highlands, and who also have a considerable number of adherents, mainly of Irish descent, in the large working towns of Scotland. Then you have the Episcopalians, who are also, I believe, a somewhat growing body. But the main body of the Scottish people are Presbyterians, and they are divided between the three forms of the Established Church, the Free Church, and the United Presbyterian Church. I dare say that to many of your Lordships the doctrinal distinctions between those three denominations may not be very clear, but in Scotland they are well known, and the members of those three religious bodies themselves know extremely well to which of those three Churches they belong. And not merely do they know to which of those three Churches they belong, but they have no objection whatever to state their religious beliefs. My Lords, it has been argued that it is an impertinence on the part of the State to ask any man to write down what is his form of religious belief. I am quite certain there will be no objection taken on that score, at all events among a very large majority of the people of Scotland. And, my Lords, you must remember that this matter is not being dealt with now from an exclusively novel point of view. This is not the first time we are asked to undertake to deal with it. We have dealt with it, as I have told your Lordships, in Ireland. It was dealt with in the year 1860. Mr. Cardwell then inserted a clause which I think, if I remember rightly, was proposed by Lord Emly, enforcing a religious Return in regard to Ireland. What were the reasons why that was done? I do not think those reasons are very far to seek. I believe that that proposal was made because statesmen were at that time of opinion that questions connected with the Irish Church were likely to come forward within the ensuing 10 years. I imagine the Return was given in accordance with the wishes of the large proportion of the people of Ireland, and it has been worked upon, and successfully, from that time up to the present. My Lords, I may go even a little further. In 1860 that Return was a Return which everyone was compelled to make; but in the year 1880 it was made an optional Return, and I have the best reasons for knowing from official statements that the Return which was made in 1880 was within the smallest possible fraction as full a Return as was made when a religious Return was a compulsory matter. It was Mr. Forster, I believe. who desired that that Return should be optional instead of being compulsory, and the result was that that Return was willingly complied with. My Lords, I have reason for knowing, also, that it is approved of by ministers of all religious denominations, and that it has been found very useful for various practical purposes. Now, I do not think I need trouble your Lordships with many more remarks. Who is there in Scotland, I should like to know, who objects to it? I have been reading lately, and I dare say most of your Lordships have who are connected with Scotland, what has passed at the meetings of the General Assembly of the Free Church and of the Established Church, in Edinburgh, and I observe that the Established Church approved of such Returns being given, and that the Free Church disapproved of it. I think they resolved to present a Petition to Parliament against it. I have made inquiries in the matter, but I think up to the present time that Petition has not been presented. I was rather anxious to see it for this reason, that I wanted to know what were the grounds which they put forward for objecting to a Return of this kind. In the year 1870, as I told your Lordships just now, they approved of a Return of that description. But what I desire to impress upon your Lordships is with regard to a Return of this kind under the present circumstances, when the question of the disestablishment of the Church in Scotland has become a very important political question, that the desirability or undesirability of such a Return is not a matter to be decided by any Church or by any Churches. It is a matter for Parliament to consider, and if Parliament is of opinion that, in dealing with such a grave question as this, it is necessary and essential to have the very best information which can be obtained, then I hope that Parliament will insist, at all events, for Scotland and Wales, upon such a Return being made. My Lords, holding such opinions, I beg to move the Resolution of which I have given notice.

Moved to resolve—

"That it is desirable that in the Returns of the forthcoming Census information should be obtained as to the religious persuasion of all persons resident in England, Wales, and Scotland, distinguishing in Scotland between the various Presbyterian denominations."—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

*THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, on a recent occasion we were entertained by a member of this House, who sits on the Cross Benches, Lord Wemyss, with a discussion upon the merits of several Bills which are still in the House of Commons. I ventured, and I think some other Members of the House ventured then to point out, that that was an unusual and an irregular proceeding. Fortunately in this House we have a good deal of time, but if the practice of discussing Bills which are still in the other House of Parliament was to obtain, and if the contagion of it was to stretch across that hall I dread to think of the increased power of delay which would result from such a practice. But my noble Friend opposite has gone further than discussing a Bill which is in the other House of Parliament; he has discussed a Bill which is to be introduced into the other House of Parliament, and he wants your Lordships in this House to prescribe the form that it is to take. I feel that on mere Parliamentary grounds alone, on mere grounds of regularity of procedure, I should not be at all performing my duty if I in any way acceded to the design of the noble Lord, or stated an opinion with regard to the matters which he has raised. I am confirmed in that view of my duty by the peculiar compromise of opinion at which he has himself arrived. Many people have thought that it is desirable to have a religious Census everywhere; other people have thought that it is not desirable to extend that principle to the British Isles, but I have never before heard any opinion expressed that it is desirable to have a religious Census in Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, and not in England. What is the ground which the noble Lord puts forward of such a distinction? He says that our religious differences are much more minute in England than those between the various sects in Wales and Scotland. Well, that is news to me. I have always understood that it is one of the privileges of the Northern intellect to be able to distinguish between the various churches of the other side of the Border with a facility which is thoroughly denied to our coarser Southern intellect. Again, the noble Lord seemed to think that there was a puculiar species of timidity and terror, which belonged to the people South of the Tweed, and East of whatever boundary divides us from Wales—that whereas in Scotland people did not mind being asked to what religion they belonged; in England they felt a great terror in doing so, and always called themselves members of the Church of England.

*THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: I said that it was only the opponents of this Motion who said so.

*THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: But my noble Friend, by acceding to the omission of England, gives some currency to that argument. Well, I do not accept that opinion of my countrymen at all. They always seem to me to be very free to express their opinions upon any subject, religious or otherwise, which comes uppermost. And I fear that if we once admit the refusal or inability of people to express their own religious opinions as a ground for not taking a Religious Census, you cannot confine that argument to England alone. Surely, there must be some people in Ireland, for instance, who have some fears of the opinions of their neighbours on matters which affect the community, either in a religious or a political sense. I do not wish to claim for my own countrymen any unusual amount of moral courage, but I really think they express their opinions quite as freely as they do in the Southern and Western districts of Ireland. I do not know what remedy we can adopt. What shall we do if we cannot trust a man to say of what religion he is? Shall we require an attestation from his two senior female relatives in order to ascertain to what religion he belongs? It appears to me that the speech of my noble Friend while sinning in the first instance, and principally sinning against Parliamentary regularity, has also, in the glimpse which it has allowed us to have of the logical condition of his own mind, warned us against forming any premature opinions on this subject. It is a matter to which I hope Parliament will give its attention. There is no doubt that by the House of laymen in England and the Church of Scotland asking for this Religious Census, the position is somewhat altered on this question from what it was in former years, but I would earnestly deprecate any premature decision. I hope we shall not treat it, when the matter is before us, as a Government or Party question, but as one upon which each can give his opinion according to the best of his ability. I hope, however, that we shall not commit the gross irregularity of pronouncing an opinion upon Bills which are not yet before us.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, for many years I have generally agreed more or less with the noble Earl, if not with the noble Marquess, but on this occasion I must say I think that the criticism of the noble Marquess is just. I have been informed that there is a Departmental inquiry now going on with regard to the best mode of carrying this Census into effect; and I think it would be very premature for this House to give its opinion with regard to the Census before the Bill has been introduced, which the noble Marquess has said is to be introduced into the House of Commons. My own opinion is strongly against introducing this clause for the purpose of obtaining a Religious Census. It is a matter which has been discussed for a very long time; it has been answered three times in the negative, and, in my own opinion, is entirely bad. But I am quite sure of one thing, and that is, that it is a great object to make this Census popular, and that anything which creates violent opposition to the Bill in the way proposed would be a very much greater Parliamentary evil than if the Religious Census were left out in dealing with this question, whether you shall include in or leave out of it a particular form of information. There is one point upon which I do not agree with the noble Marquess, and that is, that there should be no difference made between Scotland and England. Supposing the one country desired that this piece of information should be obtained, and the other did not, although I have said my opinion is against the insertion of a clause calling for this particular information, yet if all Scotland were unanimous, which I very much doubt, notwithstanding the assurances of the noble Earl, in the desire to have it, that would place the question in a different position to what it is in England; for I believe the opposition would be still more violent than that which made the objection successful formerly. I do not know whether it was necessary to say even as much as I have said; but I entirely agree in the inexpediency of pressing this Resolution, and the more so because it strikes me that the Resolution of the noble Earl and his speech do not agree, for his speech was in favour of leaving out England, while his Resolution is for including it.

*THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, I hope I may be allowed to offer a few remarks upon the suggested advantages and disadvantages of such a proposition as this, as it is naturally supposed that the Church may have a view upon them. It is very often pressed upon the authorities of the Church that they should ask for a Religious Census. It is pressed on the ground of assertions which are constantly made as to the numerical position of the Church in comparison with other bodies, which we Churchmen believe to be entirely incorrect. But I believe that I shall state the real opinion of the authorities of the Church if I say that they have no intention to press for a Religious Census, and that simply upon the grounds put forward by the Nonconformists. It is put forward by Nonconformists that it would interfere with their religious freedom, and it is also argued that an advantage would be derived by the Church from the supposed fact that persons who do not belong to the Church of England would possibly enrol themselves in the ranks of her people. The Church has no desire to take advantage of either position. She has no desire to reap any advantage from what could be regarded as an interference with the religious freedom of the Nonconformists, and certainly she does not wish to swell her lists by including in them people who are not of her religion. My Lords, the Church will, therefore, not press for anything of the kind. On the other hand, the Church will not offer the slightest resistance or objection to whatever may be thought advisable. The Church has knowledge of many facts about her own position, and she would not object in the least if it were proposed to take such a Census, either in England or Wales. With regard to Scotland I have no right, of course, to speak. I feel that this is entirely a matter for the Government to determine, and I was very glad to hear the noble Earl say that he moved the question on purely Parliamentary grounds. The Church, I repeat, will feel no objection to a Religious Census being taken, but will make no movement to press for it.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: My Lords, before the question is put, I wish to say a word or two in reply. After what has been said from the two Front Cross Benches I shall not, of course, ask your Lordships to take a vote on the question; but if the sins of my speech were purely and simply sins with regard to procedure, I can assure the noble Marquess that I am quite ready to accede to everything he has said and to postpone my Motion until this Bill, which I am told is not yet introduced—I do not know when it will be—has been introduced, or rather until such time as the Bill shall come up to this House. But I am afraid that I must have been rather awkward in the language which I used in expressing my own opinions, because the noble Marquess appears to have gathered from my speech that I saw great objections to such a Census being taken in England. My Lords, that is not at all what I intended; and if my words bear that meaning, I am afraid they were not very well chosen words. What I intended to convey to your Lordships was that if there is a strong objection felt in England—which I believe there is—that objection does not, in my opinion, apply to Wales, and still less does it apply to Scotland; and that in Scotland, at all events, the subject might be dealt with, and ought to be dealt with, in exactly the same way in which it has been dealt with in Ireland. I notice that neither of the noble Lords have alluded at all to the question of Ireland. On the question of Ireland I may, I daresay, on a future occasion have to call your Lordships' attention to the matter: but it is a very remarkable thing that when important matters with regard to the Irish Church were coming to the front, Parliament was then of opinion, and very rightly of opinion, that it was desirable that some kind of information should be obtained with regard to the position of that Church. It appears to me that exactly the same remark applies to the Established Church in Scotland and also to the Established Church in Wales. But I need not detain your Lordships any further, and, with your Lordships' permission, I will ask your Lordships' leave to withdraw the Motion.

Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

CHILDREN'S LIFE INSURANCE BILL —(No. 97.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

*THE BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH: My Lords, the Bill to which I have to ask your Lordships to give a Second Reading this evening is a Bill for amending the law respecting child insurance; and it appears to me that, in order to induce your Lordships to do this, I am bound to show you three things: first of all, that the present law affecting child insurance is unsound in principle and defective in operation; in the next place, that it leads to a very serious amount of evil, no less an evil than that of largely extended infanticide; and, thirdly, that the Amendments of the law which I now propose are likely to be effective in checking those evils as are in themselves just and reasonable. Now, my Lords, in the first place, let us ask ourselves what is the law at present which regulates child insurance in this country. Child insurance in this country is a thing of comparatively recent date. Until 25 years ago it was practically all but impossible that a child's life could be insured in this country. For 100 years previously to that time all life insurance, including that of children, was regulated by the well-known Statute 14 George III. cap. 48, which forbade all insurances being effected on lives unless the insurer could show an insurable pecuniary interest in the life, and it forbade any sum being insured for more than that pecuniary interest. The reason given in the Statute is a very remarkable one; it is in order to prevent wagering and gambling, or, in other words, gambling in human life and speculating on human death. My Lords, that law prevailed for 100 years. Obviously cases have been very few in which a parent could have a pecuniary interest in the life of a child and in which he could thereupon proceed to insure its life under that Act. In 1875, however, the Legislature, with the best possible intentions, in order to encourage thrift in the working classes, passed what is known as the Friendly Societies Act. That Act repealed this salutary provision of the Statute of George III., and, within certain limits, of which I will speak presently, allowed the insurance of child life. Now, my Lords, obviously the principle on which the Parliament of that day allowed this was not, strictly speaking, the principle of life insurance at all. The life of the child was permitted to be insured on this ground, that although the child would produce no pecuniary gain to the parent during its life, the expenses connected with the death of the child might be heavy in respect of nurse, doctor, funeral, and so forth, and the Legislature intended that the parent should be enabled to recoup himself or provide beforehand for those expenses by an insurance on the child's life. In point of fact, my Lords, strictly speaking, children were allowed under this Act, as goods were allowed, to be insured. Under the Act of George III. goods which bring no pecuniary gain to the insurer, but the loss of which may be injurious to him, were permitted to be insured. My Lords, I cannot put the effect of this Act better than by saying that it allowed the lives of children to be insured as perishable—sadly perishable—goods. Now, it is quite clear that a person insuring either animate or inanimate goods is exposed to this temptation, that he may insure for a large sum, and then, in order to obtain that sum, destroy the thing that is insured. And the Parliament of that day were quite alive to this evil. But they thought that they had sufficiently guarded against it by what I may venture to call a very clumsy provision which has proved a very inefficient protection against this evil; that is to say, they fixed a money limit in regard to the amount to be insured. The amount for which the insurance was allowed to be effected was, in the case of a child under five years of age, £6, and of a child between five and 10 years of age £10. Now, my Lords, to pass over the obvious absurdity of saying that a limit of £6 is sufficient to save the life of a child of five years of age, but that, for the same purpose, the limit may be extended to £10 beyond that age—that the limit of £6 is sufficient at five years old, but that a limit of £10 is sufficient in the case of a child which may be only three months older—there is this vital and inherent defect in attempting to provide a safeguard by imposing a money limit, that it can only be done on one impossible condition; that is to say, that you shall so balance the amount of death expenses on the one hand, and the amount of death profit on the other, that they shall be as nearly as possible equalised; because, if it should come to pass that while you have in the amount of death profit a fixed sum, yet that, owing to circumstances either beyond the control of the insurer or largely within his control, as I shall presently show your Lordships may be the case, the amount of death expenses are considerably lowered, while the amount of death profit remains unchanged, immediately there emerges a margin of profit from tho death, and with that margin of profit there emerges the temptation and danger of the commission of a crime. That, my Lords, is, I think, the inherent vice of any attempt at protection by imposing a money limit. Before I go on to show you how large a margin of profit does ensue to the insurer under the present law, let me point out that if there be a temptation and danger to life under the existing law, that danger is a hundredfold greater in the case of infant than in the case of adult life. The adult leads his life for the most part independently of the insurer, and to take the adult's life requires the commission of some deed of violence or some act of poisoning which may be traceable after death; but, in the case of infant life, none of these conditions exist. The fragile existence of the child is dependent for its very sustenance during its life, and for its preservation in disease upon the care and is absolutely at the mercy of the person, who, being its parent or its guardian, may have a pecuniary interest in its death. Is there, I would ask, any one of your Lordships who would allow one of your children to be entrusted to a sick nurse, who had a direct pecuniary interest in its death? But that is the case with regard to child insurance. In order to bring about a child's death there is no occasion for the violence which would be required in the case of an adult. It is only necessary that there should be a little neglect, a little exposure, a failure to administer the needful food or medicine, and the little life is quenched. My Lords, we know that the parent or immediate guardian of a child holds that child's life in the hollow of his hand, and it only requires a slight act of negligence, not perceptible to bystanders, for the death profit to be obtained. In the case of infant life insurance, you have, therefore, all the circumstances requisite for producing crime; you have present temptation, you have enormous facility, and you have almost absolute impunity. The wonder would be if crime did not take place under those circumstances. Now, I will show your Lordships what is the margin of profit which will ensue in these cases to act as a temptation to crime. I must now ask your Lordships' attention to figures with regard to these insurances to show the extent of this evil. Child insurance has become a specialty in connection with three or four great Insurance Companies which have expanded it to gigantic dimensions. There are no less than 600,000 children insured at this moment in Great Britain. These Societies are what I may call "Collecting Societies," which undertake the bulk of this kind of business. I desire your Lordships to note that I distinguish between Friendly Societies and these great Insurance Societies which conduct their business by collecting agents all over the country. As I have said, there are but three or four of these great collecting Insurance Societies, and they do about 80 per cent. of the whole of the money value of this child insurance class of business. As to these Insurance Companies, opinions differ very much in regard to them. Opinion with regard to them ranges between the opinions of very competent judges, who are rash and irreverent enough to speak of them as "pests of society," up to the opinions of those Insurance Societies themselves, who assure us that they are the most calumniated persons in the world, and that they are nothing less than bands of enlightened philanthropists who, purely in the interests, and simply for the comfort and well-being of, the working classes, go about persuading them to insure the lives of their children. It is a matter of perfect indifference to my argument which of those views is taken. I am perfectly willing to accept all the Insurance Societies say of themselves, as to their disinterested benevolence and philanthropy, and to acknowledge they could not possibly be better if their Board of Directors consisted of Archbishops, and if all their collecting agents were Bishops, and I suppose, my Lords, that a higher ideal of human perfection you could hardly expect me to put before you. I am quite content to take that view, because what we are concerned with here is not the motives of these Societies, but their methods. Now, I have a word to say about their methods and their results. Those methods, my Lords, are these: They flood and inundate the country with a number of insurance agents who receive a premium of no less than 30 per cent. upon each insurance. Those agents go from street to street, from house to house, from tenement to tenement, urging, persuading, pestering poor people to insure their children. Your Lordships will scarcely believe it, but I am told it is a fact, that in the benevolent zeal and earnestness of these agents to do good, children are sometimes actually insured before they are born, and the sex of the child has afterwards to be put into the policy! From this follows one or two things. In the first place, that these highly competitive agents are not too scrupulous as to the characters of the persons whose children they insure, nor too scrupulous as to evasions of the law in regard to those insurances. Another effect is that this keen competition has reduced, naturally, the amount of the premiums paid on the one hand, and enhanced the amount of the policy monies on the other, to the utmost limits consistent with the modest profits which these benevolent persons allow themselves. I am going to give your Lordships a very short calculation to show the exact amount of profit that may be made on the death of a child whose life has been insured with one of these Insurance Companies. We will suppose that a parent insures a child for 1d. a week, and that that weekly payment goes on for six months. At the end of the six months he will have paid 2s. 2d., and then, upon the death of the child, he receives £2 10s. 6d. Well, my Lords, what are you, on the other hand, to deduct from that sum? You are to deduct, of course, all necessary death expenses. Yes, my Lords, but only necessary death expenses. I think we may safely say that a parent who means to profit by a child's death will not incur unnecessary expense upon the death. He is not likely to send for a doctor or a sick nurse, whose aim will be to preserve the life he wants to destroy; and I do not think, when the death takes place, he is likely to go into very deep or expensive mourning for the death of the six months old child whom he has just murdered! Then, my Lords, let us see what the death expenses are likely to be. First, there is the expense of the funeral, and not even necessarily that, because the parent may drink every penny of the insurance money, and then the parish will be compelled to bury the child. But let us see what that expense, if incurred, may be? I have a list here of 12 undertakers in London who announce in their windows that they will conduct the burials of children under five, all expenses included, for sums ranging from £1 to 15s. Deduct that sum, together with the 2s. 2d. premium, from the insurance money £2 10s. 6d., and you have an average balance of something like £1 8s. 4d. profit. Not unfrequently, however, a child is insured in two companies. Nothing is commoner than the double insurance of children; and then for the additional penny a week, the parent gets the whole of the second sum of £2 10s., because although there may be two insurances there can be but one funeral, and the profit, as I have made it out, is simply this: that for the expenditure of 4s. 4d. in the course of six months the parent receives £5 1s., so that a balance or premium emerges on infantile murder of £3 16s. 4d. Of course, in the case of halfpenny premiums, the sum received is the half of that. Now, my Lords, these sums may seem very small to your Lordships, but £2 or £3 is not a small sum to that class which insures for a penny or a halfpenny per week. It is a very considerable sum to a needy man. It means the payment of arrears of rent, getting clothes or tools out of pawn, and far more frequently it means an immediate and near prospect of a big debauch, and the spending of the insurance money in drink. It has given rise to a horrible state of things in our great towns. Parents have been heard more than once to say of a dead or dying child, "Now we shall have a little funeral, and a big drink." My Lords, I state the whole case for the Bill in that one sentence. I want to stop these "little funerals and big drinks." I ask your Lordships to consider what horrible demoralisation to the human mind and heart there must be caused by this system when such a sickening phrase as that can become proverbial. Then, I ask your Lordships to see what protection there is for these child lives? We are told that there is the protection of parental care and affection. I am very far from denying that in the very great majority of cases that is a real protection; but it is not adequate to meet all cases. We are accused of libelling the working classes in this matter, and of representing them as if they were devoid of natural affection. That accusation is absurd. We do not libel the grocer when we pass statutes against false weights and measures; we Bishops do not libel the clergy when we propose measures for enforcing clergy discipline. In every class and profession there is a residuum of evil-disposed persons, and to take legislative precautions against them is no libel upon the rest. I believe that the affection of the poor for their children, and the privations they will go through in order to bring them up decently and put them out in life, their sacrifices for them, their care for them in times of sickness, are very noble traits among them. This beautiful feature in the character of poor working men and women is often exhibited in a way that puts to shame their betters. But there are such people as unnatural, cruel, and drunken parents; and until this residuum improves or disappears, there must, in the present state of the law, as I have shown, be serious danger to child life. My Lords, let me observe to you that though the proportion of these bad and cruel parents may be relatively small compared with the vast number of poor who treat their children with kindness, it may be absolutely very large. If only one in each thousand of these 600,000 children meets with foul play, it is a small figure as represented in decimal fractions, but it means 600 children murdered in England every year. Take, again, other classes of children who are brought into the world every year in this country. There are 54,000 children who are described by the significant phrase "not wanted," illegitimate children. Take the case of the baby-farmer, who takes from the young trusting mother her child in order to hide her shame, and then locks it within her detestable den, where it will rot and starve. When you put all these things together, I ask your Lordships, may not there be very serious danger to child life? Then there is the question of the protection afforded by doctor's certificates. The doctor must certify, of course, that the child has died from natural causes, or there will be an inquest and consequent exposure. My Lords, a doctor's certificate in most of these cases cannot be worth the paper it is written upon. The doctor is obliged to certify that the child has died from natural causes. The child may present all the symptoms of having died from what began from a natural cause, though its death has, in fact, been aggravated by improper food and improper treatment, and the doctor cannot possibly distinguish between the one case and the other. His certificate is, therefore, useless, unless he knows the history of the case. From whom is he to get that history? The only persons who can give it him are the persons who *ex hypothesi* are engaged in the proceeding of so ill-treating the child as that it shall die. My Lords, I will give you one letter from a medical man before I go further, and I will at once ask your Lordships to take each piece of evidence which I give you merely as sample evidence, for if I were to put all the evidence in my possession before you my speech would last until midnight. I have here a letter from Dr. Barwise, a medical man of Birmingham, who wrote to the public papers about it. He says—

> You are to my painful knowledge absolutely within the truth when you state that every year hundreds of parents are guilty of child-murder in this town. Besides the cases brought to light in the Coroners' Courts, there are vast numbers more which are reported to the Coroner, but which, after inquiry, he decides it would be useless to hold inquests upon, and there are also many more where the medical attendant is compelled to grant a certificate, because he could prove nothing against the statement of the parents. The fact is, there are no certain signs whereby starvation can be detected, and the medical man has to rely upon the bare word of the mother that the child is properly and regularly fed. Every thoughtful practitioner must be fully convinced that he has filled up 'marasmus' (wasting disease) to parents who have practically starved their children to death. Frequently the first thing the mother says is—'I suppose you will give me a certificate if any thing happens.' Hardly a day passes without my hearing it, and I generally find that the parent would gain several pounds from some Insurance Office if their child died."

So much, my Lords, for the protection afforded by doctors' certificates. Then, if these people do not escape that mesh there is the chance of a Coroner's Inquest. But, again, there is little chance of the Coroner interfering successfully, because the principal witness must be the medical man—the poor little children are, of course, not competent witnesses—and who else is there to convict in the vast majority of these cases? The Coroner's Juries are generally told by the Coroner, "There is no legal evidence to convict this person." I will now trouble your Lordships with a very important and interesting letter from another medical man on this subject. He says, writing to myself—

> "I am perfectly satisfied that there are any number of murders of innocent children for the sake of the insurance money. Unfortunately, it is almost impossible to bring the crime home to the parents, as it is so easy to get rid of an infant by neglect, irregular feeding, and bad food, and, even when ill, neglecting to carry out the doctor's orders. I have seen several cases of this sort when in practice in Devonshire, and was so impressed with the fact that I gave out that I would have an inquest held on any child dying that was insured. In some very bad cases in which inquests were held I was met by the one question, Are you prepared to swear that the child would have lived had it been properly fed? As I could not swear to anything of the kind, but simply express my belief, the verdict was returned as death from natural causes, although everyone knew well that the babies had been as much murdered as if they had had their throats cut. The mothers are too crafty to starve them to death, but give them sour food, causing diarrhœa, expose them to cold, &c., and neglect to give medicine, &c., as ordered."

And then the infant dies. Your Lordships see, therefore, what protection there is afforded by the Coroner's Inquest and Jury. Then, if they do not escape the Inquest, next comes the Court of Assize; and if your Lordships think for a moment how much stronger the evidence is required to be in a Court of Assize, and how difficult it is to obtain a verdict there, you will see how likely these persons are again to escape conviction, that each of the successive meshes lets through a vast number of cases, and that neither the doctor's certificate, the Coroner's Jury, nor the Court of Assizes prove a sufficient check upon infanticide. My Lords, I have gone through the cases of supposed protection to child life, which, it is sometimes said, make infant insurance perfectly safe, and your Lordships will judge of what effect they are; but I shall prove to your Lordships that infanticide really does occur. We who bring forward this Bill are asked, "Can you produce any cases of infanticide?" If, by cases of infanticide, you mean cases of infanticide which have been brought to trial, and in which a conviction has been obtained, and where those convicted have been punished, of course we cannot produce such cases. If we could, there would be no need of this Bill. It is just because there are in the majority of cases no means of securing punishment that it is necessary to alter the law. As the Committee of the House of Commons on Friendly Societies, in their Report the other day, say—

> "It is almost impossible to bring to conviction crimes committed in the privacy of the house."

It is necessary, therefore, to bring forward a Bill of this kind. But, my Lords, these convictions do occur, and when they do occur, they let in a very lurid light on child insurance. My Lords, I need scarcely say to you that the evidence which will warrant a Judge and jury in hanging a man for murder, and the evidence which will warrant the passing of an Act to prevent him committing murder, are not exactly of the same character; and I think it is absurd to ask us to give you the same evidence in one case as in the other. But I will give you the opinion of persons who are quite competent, as your Lordships will agree, to judge in this matter. First, I will give you the opinions of Her Majesty's Judges. They are certainly persons who have ample opportunity of forming an opinion. Let us see what they say. Mr. Justice Day stated in a recent case—

> "Those pests of society, those deadly Societies which insure children, which seem to be instituted for the destruction of children, for the perpetration of murder."

Here is Mr. Justice Wills—

> "It is a melancholy fact that in a great many of these cases—the deaths of young children—the wretched children's lives have been insured. These Insurance Clubs or Societies have their agents all over the Kingdom, persuading people to insure the lives of their children for sums which are a great temptation toward their destruction. I cannot say how strongly I feel on the subject of these Insurance Societies for very small children. Originally, I have no doubt, some of them were started with the motive and for the purpose of inducing people to save, so that, in the event of a calamity happening, they would have the means to meet it; but they have terribly degenerated. How many cases have I tried, from one end of the year to the other, in which the subject of the inquiry was the death of children whose lives had been insured? Oftentimes it would be a much more correct definition of these so-called Insurance Societies to say that they were Death Insurance Societies."

Those are the opinions of Her Majesty's Judges. Now, my Lords, I will give you the opinions, if you will bear with me for a moment or two longer, of a number of Coroners. Here is the opinion of Dr. Macdonald, the Coroner for the North-East of London. He was asked, in giving evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons—

> "Are you of opinion that infantile insurance is an incentive to crime? A. I am distinctly of that opinion.—Q. You have also had experience as a Medical Officer. Does the result of your practice run to the same conclusion? A. Yes, as a doctor I saw that the general rule was not to kill the children outright, but to let them die gradually from bad feeding, not having medical attendance, and so on."

Another Coroner, Mr. Troutbeck, of West London, says—

> "The practice of insuring infants' lives seems to me to be a custom that is to be condemned on every ground."

Then Mr. Hawkes, the Coroner for Birmingham, says—

> "As long as those abominable infantile Insurance Societies exist, so long will mothers come to this Court to tell the story the jury have heard to-day."

Then the Coroner for North and South Wales, Mr. Cuthbertson Howell, says—

> "The practice of insuring children is becoming far too common. If insured children are taken ill, they are frequently neglected. Their parents have a direct interest in their death."

One instance more, my Lords. Mr. Carter, the Coroner for the County of Gloucestershire, says—

> "The longer I live, the more occasions I have to look with suspicion on deaths of young children that are insured. Insurance encourages a greater interest in their deaths than in their survival. I shall do all I can to put it down."

My Lords, I have given you the evidence of Coroners. I will now pass on to the evidence of clergymen. You will find that two Committees of the Houses of Convocation reported strongly upon this subject, and the last Committee more strongly than the first. I will now give the evidence of Public Registrars, who have great acquaintance with these matters. Take the opinion of Mr. Ludlow, the Chief Registrar General of Friendly Societies, as given before the Committee of the House of Commons. He says—

> "I think it perfectly clear that in no case is it the interest of these Societies to increase infant mortality; all Insurance Bodies wish life to be prolonged and not shortened; but I have no doubt that the practice of such societies does tend, and must tend, to increase infant mortality. The mere fact that a collector calls week by week at a poor man's house, or room, rather, to receive ½d. premium for each of his children must familiarise those parents with the death of those children."

Then Mr. Ludlow is further questioned by Mr. W. F. Lawrence, who says—

> "That is precisely what I wanted to elucidate; it is only presumption; there is no evidence really worth talking of to prove the increase of infant mortality under the system; it is what we may all think likely, but there is no real evidence to go upon. Answer: No; but at the Friendly Society Commission we certainly found that infant mortality was greatest in those towns and localities where these Societies were strongest."

Then Dr. Thomas W. Grimshaw, Registrar General of Ireland, referring to the City of Dublin death-rate amongst children, said it

> "Was very large, and an extraordinary thing to be observed in connection with it was the number of the children who died not having been seen by medical men, and no exertion having been made to save their lives. The way in which children were allowed to die, so that insurance money might be had for them, was a disgrace to the whole nation."

Let me give your Lordships one more instance, and a very important one. It is the evidence which is afforded by the verdict of a jury last year, if I recollect rightly, in a case of child murder, where the child's life was insured—

> "The jury are of opinion that the facilities given by the loose system of life insurance practised by some of the companies is an incentive to wilful murder for the sake of the insurance money."

And they desired the coroner to convey that expression of opinion to the Home Secretary, in the hope that the Government might initiate some legislation to remedy the evil. My Lords, I have now given you a large amount of evidence from our Judges, coroners, medical men, clergymen, and insurance registrars; and now let me give you the last expression of opinion with which I shall trouble the House, and to me one that has moved my own mind very much. When it was known that I was introducing this Bill into your Lordships' House I received a letter from the head of a shoe factory in my own diocese, from one of those men who, as we say in Northamptonshire, "has risen from the shoemakers' bench" to the control of a considerable factory. He writes to me to say—

> "My Lord, I am delighted to hear that you intend introducing a Bill into the House of Lords to stay the lives of infants from being insured, as this is getting a crying evil in our villages. Agents are coming round daily persuading mothers to ensure the lives of their children. I feel persuaded that once the question is taken up in Parliament, it will stay a great amount of evil."

May I add one instance more which affects my own mind greatly? The wife of a respectable artisan in Peterborough, who had lately lost her child in the infirmary, said to the Sunday school teacher of her child—

> "Ah! Miss, my poor child was not insured; my husband and I lived in Sheffield 11 years, and we saw so much of the wickedness in the way of child insurance that we agreed that no child of ours should ever be insured."

And when she was told I was bringing in this Bill she said, "Thank God! he does not know the good he will do." This, my Lords, is evidence from the working classes, whom we, the promoters of this Bill, are accused of libelling. The evidence I have given your Lordships' House is simply sample evidence, and it can be multiplied to any extent. Now, against all this, what is there to be said? We are told there is statistical evidence against it, and I must really ask your Lordships' attention for a moment to this extraordinary example of statistics. This is not a very amusing subject, but I think this will amuse your Lordships. We are told that it is impossible that there can be this amount of child murder, because the statistics show that the percentage of mortality among the insured children is considerably lower than the general death rate all over England, to the extent of no less than 8 to 15 in favour of the children insured in these Societies. Well, my Lords, if this precious piece of statistics were worth anything, as I can assure your Lordships it is not, it would certainly prove the most extraordinary physiological fact conceivable; it would prove that so invigorating is the process of insurance in the case of an unconscious child six months old, that it lives longer than an uninsured child. So that, my Lords, it would come to this, if these statistics are correct, that these Insurance Societies are a kind of health resort for sick children, and that when a doctor has tried every other remedy and feels himself compelled to say "I can do no more," he need only add "Try insurance; and if that does not save his life, nothing else will." But these extraordinary statistics are easily disposed of in a moment. The Registrar General's Returns are, of course, credited with the number of deaths of all children born alive in this country, but the Insurance Societies are not credited with the deaths of those children who die before they have been insured. Of course, the rate of mortality diminishes day by day from their birth. Another most important thing to be remembered is that a very large amount of child insurances in these Societies fall through; that is to say, their parents fail to keep up the payment of premiums on the policies, and they become what are called "lapses." In that case they go off the books of the Societies, and I suppose the benevolence of the Societies does not induce them afterwards to endeavour to trace out the parents for the purpose of giving them any benefit from the premiums paid. If those lapses amount, as I am told they do, to nearly one-third of the whole number of such policies taken out, your Lordships will clearly see that the area in the one case from which the percentage is taken, and the area in the other are not equal, and, therefore, these statistics are worth nothing. My Lords, I have gone as rapidly as I could through the very largely-extended case which I have to put before your Lordships consistently with doing anything like justice to it or making it plain to the House; and I have, in the last instance, to put before your Lordships what the remedies are which I propose in my Bill for these terrible evils. The Bill is really very simple and very brief. It contains in the 1st clause a provision which extends the protected life of a child to 14 for boys, and 16 for girls. That, as most of the other provisions are, is in accordance with the recommendation of the Select Committee of the House of Commons. It brings down, also, the absurd inequality between the death expenses and the death profits by lowering the amounts for which children's lives can be insured. Then follows in Clause 2 a provision upon which I confess I lay very much stress, though it has been strongly objected to, and it is the provision that the money shall not go to the parent or person insuring, but to the undertaker. This follows the analogy of the sick club, where the money does not go to the parent, but to the doctor attending the sick child. There can be no profit to the parent under this clause. But there are some objections put forward to this provision. The first is, that there may be collusion between the undertaker and the parent. Against that we provide by heavy penalties to be inflicted for any such collusion, and I should hope and trust that if there were any such attempts those penalties would be rigorously inflicted, and I should then hope that the sight of a collusive undertaker and parent on the treadmill would have a very good effect in preventing those collusions for the future. But the principal objections which we have to meet, we may say, are two: one is, that it would prevent the parent providing for the medical attendance upon the child, as the money must all go to the undertaker. But the services of a doctor can be obtained for the payment of a penny a week by another insurance. There is nothing to prevent the parent doing that with no gain to accrue at the child's death. But, my Lords, if that is not thought to be enough I am perfectly willing to put a clause into the Bill which will provide for payment of the doctor's attendance out of the insurance money, as well as the undertaker's fees. Then, the last objection is, that you would greatly enrich the undertakers by this measure, because the parent who has insured his child for £5 cannot put it to any other purpose which may be desired, but is obliged to give it all up to the undertaker. Well, my Lords, I would rather that undertakers should be enriched than that children should be murdered—if you are obliged to do it. But you are not in the least obliged to do it. That objection could only apply to the death-profit on insurances now effected. It could only apply in case the operation of the Act is retrospective, because as soon as new insurances had to be effected under this Act parents would not be so simple as to insure for a larger sum than was needed to provide for the funeral expenses, in order simply to enrich the undertaker. Therefore, the whole of these objections disappear, and would be at once met by doing what I am perfectly willing to do in Committee, that is to say, cutting out of the 9th clause the latter part, and leaving it simply that this Act shall not affect contracts which have been entered into until after the date of its passing, thus making it entirely prospective. I can only say that I shall be perfectly prepared to consider any Amendments upon this clause which may be proposed in Committee, which will not interfere with the object and intention of this Bill, which is simply to prevent the possibility of a death-profit being made by the insurer. My Lords, if we cannot prevent this evil by this Bill of mine, or by some other Bill which your Lordships' wisdom may devise, then there is one other alternative, and to that we shall have to come. That is, the absolute prohibition of infant insurance altogether; because I am quite certain of this, that when the conscience of the English people is once fairly roused as regards the iniquity and cruelty now going on in connection with child insurance, they will come to one resolution at any rate, that do it as you may by legislation, settle it as you choose in your wisdom, one thing they will not have, one thing you must prevent, and that is a system by which parents all over England are making money by the deaths of their children. That is what the object of the Bill is. My Lords, the other provisions in this Bill are mainly provisions which are recommended in the Report of the Friendly Societies, Committee, to which I have already alluded. Let me say a word or two in conclusion, perfectly respectfully, of the Report of that Committee of the House of Commons. That Committee, unfortunately I think, imposed upon itself a very severe limit as to taking evidence upon this subject. It excluded all evidence that was not sworn evidence, and the consequence was that a number of letters and published statements, which I have now read to your Lordships, were excluded from the consideration of the Committee on the ground that the writers were not there to swear to them. I have no doubt the Committee had good reason for what they did; but the result, unfortunately, was the exclusion of a large amount of evidence, and the consequence was a very guarded and cautious Report. But the Report, nevertheless, states that there is considerable danger to infant life under the present state of the law, and makes a number of recommendations to prevent this danger which are followed in the provisions inserted in this Bill. And now, my Lords, I have only to entreat you to pardon me for dealing at so great a length with this subject, which, I think, however, I could not possibly have compressed into smaller limits than I have set myself in dealing with it. Believe me, I have shut out very much that I could have given in the way of evidence, much that I might have said, in deference to the convenience of your Lordships; but I trust I have said enough to induce the House to consent to the Second Reading of this Bill. If your Lordships should be of opinion that the evidence before you is insufficient, and that the really well-conducted Friendly Societies should be heard before a Committee of this House the Bill is passed, I have no other objection except that it will delay this measure. I have and can have no other desire than that the best interests of the working classes should be fairly, truly, and properly considered in framing such a measure as this. But, however it may be dealt with, I am perfectly persuaded that your Lordships will not let this matter drop, that Parliament will not let this matter drop, and that the country will not let the matter drop, once the facts of the case are fairly brought before them. My Lords, I can assure you that I have not overstated my case; on the contrary, I have been careful to understate it, because I know that exaggeration has no weight with the judicial temper of this House. I have seen myself described in the papers, by my opponents, as the very pathetic prelate who is to persuade your Lordships to pass this measure. The only pathos which I have brought before your Lordships to-night is that of very sad and terrible facts. I would not attempt to induce your Lordships to pass this Bill by any persuasion of mine. If I do induce you to pass it, it will only have been by the unimpeachable evidence of its necessity which I have adduced. If what I have said is believed by your Lordships to be really true, I feel sure that I have an advocate in the heart of every one who is now listening to me, that will plead for these poor little ones much more effectively than I can plead for them. There is not a parent present who is gladdened by the sight of his little ones, who has known the joy of looking into their faces, or who has known the sorrow of looking with ineffable anguish on the still, immovable face of a little one, whom all his wealth, all that care, skill, and affection could do has failed to snatch from death—there is not a parent here who will refuse to listen to me when I plead for these little ones who have, through all their lives, never, perhaps, known a kind word or look, but have only known that last act of cruel mercy which has terminated their lives. I feel sure that your Lordships will do all in your power to interpose the strong arm of the law to defend these little helpless, hapless children from the misery which now haunts their lives, and from the greed and cruelty which too often untimely end them. My Lords, I have the honour of moving the Second Reading of the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Bishop of Peterborough.*)

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: My Lords, I have to appeal to your Lordships' indulgence, speaking under circumstances of some personal difficulty to myself, but as I had the honour of being responsible in this House for the Act of 1875, I should be failing in my duty if I did not follow the right rev. Prelate through a portion of the remarks that he has addressed to your Lordships' House. I am conscious of the enormous difficulty of attempting to mitigate in any way the effect of the impassioned appeal which the right rev. Prelate has addressed to your Lordships. He has told you that he has appealed to facts. There is one fact, and one fact only, in his speech. He told us he would produce evidence, and what he produced as evidence was only opinion. Is the evidence of opinion sufficient evidence for legislation, on a matter of this kind? Eloquence is a great gift, but I should be sorry indeed, if I possessed such eloquence as is possessed by the right rev. Prelate, to use it in the manner he has used it to-night. He began by telling us that the legislation on this matter began in the year 1875. My Lords, that is not quite consistent with my recollection of the facts. The Act of 1875 was, in respect of the burial of infants, only a consolidating measure, and kept alive the Act which was passed in the year 1854. The Bill of 1854, dealing with Friendly Societies, was introduced into the House of Commons by Mr. Sotheron Estcourt, than whom it will be admitted no more humane man ever sat in Parliament. It dealt with the necessity of such provisions as those which the right rev. Prelate introduces in his Bill. Lord Palmerston, who was then Home Secretary, said that his feelings on the subject of infant insurance were of a most painful kind; but he did not dissent from evidence being given and facts ascertained, and the measure was referred to a Select Committee of the House of Commons. On that Committee sat my noble Friend Lord Norton and also Lord Ossington, who was certainly an ornament to both Houses of Parliament. The members of that Committee went carefully into the matter, and they took evidence of a most searching kind, and it is to that evidence which I wish to call your Lordships' attention. They called before them, to give evidence, persons who were most qualified to give an opinion upon the subject, and that opinion was tested by cross-examination. Some of the gentlemen occupying the highest positions, who had expressed strong opinions *à priori*, when their evidence came to be tested by cross-examination were compelled to recede from the positions they had taken up. If I had had any notice that the right rev. Prelate would have framed such a bill of indictment against the working classes I should have been better prepared to answer it; but——

*THE BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH: Would the noble Lord pardon me for a moment. I have framed no bill of indictment against the working classes. I expressly said that I desired to pay every tribute to their affection and kindness for their children, and that the measure was necessary only for the small number in proportion to them of bad and cruel parents.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: My Lords, I do not think a few honeyed words are a sufficient apology for the eloquent attack which he has made upon the working classes. I am afraid that in answering that attack I shall have to trouble your Lordships at greater length than I should wish with the evidence given before that Committee; but I think that is the best way of meeting such a general attack upon these poor people. If I had had any idea that the right rev. Prelate would have made the speech he has addressed to your Lordships' House, I should have been better prepared to deal with it; but I shall, at all events, present to you evidence upon this subject which is complete in itself, and which cannot be impeached, from one of the most valuable Reports, in my opinion, which have ever been made to Parliament. The right rev. Prelate has told your Lordships that the present state of the law presents a large incentive to infanticide. He laughed to scorn the only real test which can be applied in the matter—the test of statistics—and he was very jocose on the idea that infants who are insured should enjoy a more lengthened vitality than infants whose lives are uninsured. I do not read the statistics in the same way as the right rev. Prelate. I read them in this way, as showing that parents who insure the lives of their children are for the most part persons of thrifty and self-denying character, and that they take care to surround their children with home comforts, home care, and home independence, and that that accounts for the great advantage which vital statistics show the children who are insured possess over those who are uninsured. My Lords, the right rev. Prelate told you that by paying 1d. a month, I think, they would obtain a considerable sum.

*The Bishop of PETERBOROUGH: If the noble Earl will pardon me again, what I said was, by paying 1d. a week for six months they would be able to obtain a certain amount of death profit.

*Earl BEAUCHAMP: It does not affect my argument. The right rev. Prelate told us that by a payment of 1d. a week for six months, which would amount to 2s. 2d., £2 10s. could be secured at death; and he then went on to describe the vast organisation of these Insurance Societies, their employing unworthy collectors, who were going about all over the country persuading poor working people to make this payment of 2s. 2d., by which at the end of six months they were to insure the payment of £2 10s. I would venture to ask, did any of your Lordships ever hear of an Insurance Society which was capable of working business on those terms with anything like profit to itself? How can an Insurance Society, by receiving 1d. a week for six months, gain a profit by paying £2 10s. at the end of that period? My Lords, the thing is monstrous, and your Lordships will see it is one of those statements which are made on *à priori* convictions, but will not stand the test of evidence and facts. I cannot understand how the right rev. Prelate has persuaded himself that it would produce any profit to an Insurance Society to conduct their business in such a manner as that. If that were done I am quite sure that Insurance Societies would always be in difficulties, they would be in a state of perpetual collapse. But I think in the very nature of things it is clear that an Insurance Society usually conducts its affairs with some kind of idea for its own profit, which certainly would be lacking to the shareholders if such a system of doing business prevailed as that which was described by the right rev. Prelate. Now, my Lords, the right rev. Prelate described how dangerous it would be to hand over the care of a sickly child to a sick-nurse before whom a temptation was laid that she should receive the amount of the death insurance. But the right rev. Prelate seemed to forget that in these cases the sick-nurse is the mother of the child, and I do not believe that there are many mothers in England—at all events, I am slow to believe it, and I should require very strong evidence to induce me to believe it—who could be driven by so miserable a bribe as that to terminate the lives—to murder their own offspring. We know that parental affection is one of the most powerful instincts, one of the holiest gifts which Almighty God has implanted in the human heart. Some few cases, I do not deny, there may be; but they are, I think, very exceptional—where people have forgotten their natural affections. But to say that parents will deliberately seek a profit will insure and destroy the lives of their children in order to gain this miserable reward, is to make a statement which I, for one, without evidence, cannot accept. My Lords, I will not follow the right rev. Prelate through his arguments. The single—only—fact which he told us in his speech was that there were in London 12 undertakers who had announcements in their windows that they undertook to conduct an infant's funeral at an entire cost of from 15s. to £1 10s. That was really the only fact which the right rev. Prelate produced in support of his argument. The rest of his evidence consisted solely of opinions the value of which I will proceed now to show your Lordships. If I trespass somewhat upon the attention of the House by reading a portion of this Report, I think you will see the importance of it, and probably your Lordships would rather have the arguments stated in the calm and measured language of this Report than in my own. It states—

"The subject of child mortality alleged to be induced by the temptation of funeral money having been referred to in the House by several Members, and having occasioned great uneasiness in the various Burial Societies throughout the Kingdom, received particular attention from your Committee. Four Judges, two Governors of Prisons, two Coroners, a Chief of Police, a Chaplain of a prison, a Registrar of Births and Deaths, and a solicitor who had been engaged in a prosecution for child murder, gave evidence before your Committee. Letters also from Inspectors of Factories were produced before them."

I desire to call your Lordships' attention to the fact that this was evidence not given merely as a matter of opinion, but tested by a cross-examination.

"The substance of their evidence was as follows:—Mr. Justice Wightman did not remember to have tried more than one case of child murder, namely, that of Honnor Gibbons and Bridget Garrety, for the murder of a child of the former, nine months old, the inducement being a sum of £4 receivable from a Burial Sociey. Those prisoners were convicted."

*The Bishop of PETERBOROUGH: Would the noble Earl state what is the date of the Report?

*Earl BEAUCHAMP: The date is 1854. I am only sorry the right rev. Prelate was not aware of this Report before he made his speech—

"Mr. Baron Alderson did not remember to have tried any case of child murder. The depositions of such a charge having been laid before him, he noticed that crime in addressing the Grand Jury at Liverpool last December, and the Grand Jury thereupon made a presentment to the effect that the interference of the Legislature was called for to put a stop to the system of money payments by Burial Societies. The prisoners, however, so charged having been tried before Mr. Baron Martin were acquitted, and that Judge informed the Committeee that there were no grounds at all for connecting the alleged crime with the receipt of funeral money. Mr. Baron Martin also informed the Committee that no other case of child murder had ever been brought before him for trial where the motive of burial money was alleged. Chief Baron Pollock gave the Committee information respecting a well-known trial for murder at Chelmsford in 1850, when a woman named May was found guilty of poisoning her husband and attempting to poison a grown-up son; and one at Lewes in 1849. In those cases the burial money was proved, or appeared to him to have been a temptation, though it was of so small an amount as between 20s. and 40s. The Governor of Chester Gaol recollected four prisoners since 1841 committed to his custody on a charge of child murder, two of whom were acquitted and two convicted."

One of these cases was the case which was referred to by Mr. Justice Wightman. Then—

"The Governor of Kirkdale Prison, in an experience of 10½ years, has had no prisoner in his custody convicted of the charge of child murder."

*The Bishop of PETERBOROUGH: Exactly so.

*Earl BEAUCHAMP: He says—

"One prisoner named, Betty Eccles, was found guilty and executed for the murder of three children in 1843, immediately before he became Governor of the gaol.

The Coroner of Stockport, in an experience of 13 years, has held three inquests in cases of alleged child murder. One proved to be an accidental death, in one the parties were acquitted, and the third was the case of Gibbons, already referred to by Mr. Justice Wightman.

The Coroner of Salford, in an experience of 22 years, has held only one inquest in a case of child murder alleged to have reference to a Burial Society, and that was the case which was tried before Mr. Baron Martin last December, when the parties were acquitted, and the evidence showed that they neither expected nor received the sum insured.

The Chief of Police at Stockport, during 15 years, part of which time he was connected with the police at Manchester, and during the last nine months at Stockport, has never had a case of child murder brought under his notice.

The Registrar of Births and Deaths, in a district at Manchester containing a population of 44,000, remembers no case of child murder and does not believe that burial money has been a temptation at all to infanticide. The Rev. W. Kelly, Chaplain, of Preston Gaol, who has published a pamphlet on this subject, said that he was not directly cognisant of any case of child murder for the sake of burial money, but that it is his opinion that the tendency of Burial Clubs is to induce neglect of an ailing child. Your Committee draw from the evidence adduced before them this conclusion: that the instances of child murder, where the motive of the criminal has been to obtain money from a Burial Society, have been so few as by no means to impose upon Parliament an obligation for the sake of public morality to legislate specially with a view to the prevention of the crime. Your Committee refer to the evidence to show that no sufficient grounds exist for the general suspicion which seems to have been entertained on this subject; they believe that suspicion to have been almost entirely founded upon a few cases brought to trial exaggerated by the horror with which the idea of a crime so heinous would naturally be regarded."

My Lords, I will not take up more of the time of the House by reading further extracts from the Report; but it deals with the proposal of the right rev. Prelate, that the money should pass directly to the undertaker. It also deals with other provisions, but I will not read more. What is really material is that the Committee, consisting as I have told you of most eminent men who went most carefully and thoroughly into the subject, arrived at the conviction that no ground existed for the general suspicion which they mention as being entertained upon the subject. With the sufferings of children, everyone must sympathise; but we must remember that it is very easy for a practised novelist to pile up the agony in a story of the description your Lordships are familiar with. We know ourselves that the very sympathy which we all feel with the sufferings of childhood does make us most anxious to do everything that lies in our power to diminish and to mitigate those sufferings; but while we are anxious to mitigate the sufferings of the children, do not let us do any injustice to other people. Do not let us in our righteous desire to diminish the amount of human misery strike a blow at the independence of the working classes, at their honest desire to keep themselves from the necessity of applying for assistance from the public rates, and to keep alive and maintain that home-life which is one of the noblest characteristics of the working classes. I now leave myself in your Lordships' hands. Feeling that I am responsible in some degree for the legislation of 1875, I thought it my duty to lay before your Lordships some of the grounds on which that legislation was founded, fortified by the Report of a Committee of eminent men, whose finding was that the suspicions entertained in this matter were groundless, and that there was not sufficient foundation for them when the evidence came to be tested.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, I cannot help saying that the noble Earl who has just addressed the House has a little understated the matter, because the opinions which he says are stated by the Report he ought to have said were expressed by the Committee which made it 36 years ago. I do not think it is quite right to say that the matter does not require investigation at the present time. As to myself, I can give personal testimony in reference to some of the cases referred to by my noble Friend in his speech; and with regard to the cases which were tried before Mr. Justice Wightman of Gibbons and Garretty, that learned Judge expressed to me—I was a very young member of the Bar at the time—that he was anxious the Legislature should in some way prevent the temptation which, in his view, on that occasion had proved to be a fearful temptation in the circumstances of that particular class of persons; that is, the temptation of getting the money falling due upon the death of the child. I cannot help thinking, on the other hand, after what has been said in the course of this Debate, that it would be not a little rash to legislate without some further investigation. I think there should be some further inquiry made before we proceed to legislation. The right rev. Prelate might, therefore, do well to consent that after the Bill has been read a second time it should go to a Select Committee, before which the different views might be properly represented, and before which evidence might be taken, which, I think, would be more applicable to the present condition of things, which it is the opinion of a great many people, as I am told, does produce evil. That evidence would be properly weighed before the Committee. For my own part, I should very much like to hear the views of two learned Judges, whose opinions have been read to us to-night, with the facts upon which those views were founded. Then I should like, also, to hear something more of the statements made by the various Coroners whose names have been mentioned, because, to my mind, the fact that people were acquitted, or that there was a failure to bring them to justice under circumstances of very suspicious death, is by no means conclusive to show that this legislation is or is not required. There may be circumstances which, in the opinion of the Coroner, would not amount to evidence of the commission or concealment of a crime, though the opinion may be entertained that you should proceed by removing the temptation. That I consider to be the object of the right rev. Prelate, and that I think your Lordships will be glad to accede to. As I understand, the right rev. Prelate is not averse to the course I have suggested. I think that would remove the objections which the noble Earl has expressed against your Lordships being induced to legislate in a hurry or without sufficient foundation..

Lord HERSCHELL: My Lords, I also very heartily support the Second Reading of this Bill, because I confess that an impression has been produced by the operation of this system of infant insurance which seems to show, in my opinion, that the legislation enacted in 1875 needs to be carried somewhat further. I would point out to the noble Earl also that the measure which the right rev. Prelate has brought forward is a further step in this matter taken upon the lines of the Act of 1875. Whether it goes too far or not, of course, may be a question. The Act of 1875 recognised that it was inexpedient to permit the insurance of the lives of young children at a profit, so to speak, beyond the expenses to which the parents may be put in case of their death. That is quite a clear proposition, because it fixes a strict limit as to the amount of insurance, and it provides for necessary certificates to be given. I need not trouble your Lordships with the machinery proposed by the Act; but it is provided also that, in cases of double insurances, if one Society has paid the other Society will not pay more than any balance there may be up to the statutory amount, and it is provided that the money is to be paid only on the certificates being forthcoming that the child has not come improperly to its end. Therefore, the scheme of the Legislature was to limit the amount to a sum which, while providing for the payment of expenses, would not afford a temptation to the parents or persons having the care of the child, and to safeguard the life of the child by requiring a medical certificate. Well now, my Lords, the suggestion is that the existing safeguards have proved insufficient, and that they have been placed too high. But I would venture to point out that the Legislature has not fixed any conditions for all time. At the present time, whatever may have been the case when the former legislation took place, it appears that these little funerals can be conducted so cheaply that even with the medical and other expenses the present maximum is fixed too high. That is obviously a case in which the Legislature can intervene if that fact is established. It is also certainly open to consideration whether the other safeguards are sufficient. But, my Lords, I am very glad that my noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack has made the suggestion he has of referring this Bill to a Select Committee. And for this reason: I think your Lordships will be somewhat sensitive about initiating legislation which concerns exclusively the working classes, who I know are not directly represented in your Lordships' House, in a manner which may affect their position considerably, without giving them an opportunity of expressing their views, so that your Lordships may be in possession of those views and receive guidance from them before initiating this legislation. For example, you have the question of amount to deal with. That, I am sure, is a matter upon which you would like to hear what the Friendly Societies who largely represent the interests of the working classes have to say with regard to whether or not the present limit is to stand. As to the rest of the machinery proposed by the Bill, I have seen considerable objection taken to the money being paid to the undertaker. This difficulty arises. If you provide that the money is to be paid to the undertaker the parent says, "I do not get it, and no one else can get it, and I have no means of doing anything." You obviously give the undertaker the entire control of the insurance money, and you might then have the undertaker, who is certain of receiving his money from the Insurance Company, doing less than justice to those who were concerned in causing the death of the child. I do not propose to deal with this matter further on the present occasion. I have only to express my satisfaction with the proposal made to refer the Bill to a Select Committee. Your Lordships will remember that though you have to pass this Bill it must be taken elsewhere, and if you deal rashly or injudiciously with the interests of the working classes in this matter you will create a vast amount of opposition to the Bill elsewhere, and you will not facilitate its enactment by its passage through this House. But if your Lordships pass the measure through this House after the working classes have themselves had an opportunity of putting forward their views as to the machinery of the Bill, although there may be some little delay at the moment, you will, in the end, accomplish your object more speedily. In saying that I support the proposal of my noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack, I would add that I think it is not made as such proposals sometimes are with the view of delaying legislation, but really, as I think will turn out to be the case, of expediting it as much as possible.

*THE BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH: My Lords, I merely rise to say how entirely and readily I concur in the suggestion of the noble and learned Lord opposite, and I will take the opportunity of adding merely one or two words with regard to the criticisms of the noble Earl. The noble Earl seemed to think I must have been drawing upon my imagination when I stated that the payment of 1d. a week for six months would obtain a payment of £2 10s. I may say that I took the statement from the published tables of the Prudential Society. It is, therefore, no imagination; it is a simple matter of fact. Then the noble Earl asked whether these Insurance Societies would be likely to conduct their business at a loss. Well, I do not suppose for a moment that they would, and their tables, no doubt, are compiled on a profit basis. But I think the fallacy of the noble Earl's argument is that he assumes that every insurance case is one of child murder. In that case, of course, the loss to the Insurance Companies would be enormous. But if the proportion be as low as I have put it, namely, one in 1,000, that loss is amply covered by the gains on the other cases. Then, with regard to the lapses of policies, in the large number of cases where children's names having been put on the books of the Insurance Company the parents have not kept up the premiums. It appears that those lapses amount to one-third of the whole number of insurances, so that the society can very well afford to pay in these murder cases, and write them off as bad debts. I do not suppose they would amount to a very large proportion among the four societies, as against the profit made upon the 600,000 child insurances during the year. Then, with regard to the statement that I have produced nothing but statements of opinion, I would submit that, on the contrary, that is exactly what the noble Earl did in his speech: he read to the House nothing but opinions 36 years old. My contention is, that it is within the last 25 years—and I go further, within the last 20 or 15 years—that this immense and dangerous development of child-insurance has taken place. It is perfectly clear that the noble Earl's authorities are out of date, and altogether out of Court in the case. I will not detain your Lordships longer in replying to the noble Earl. I am quite sure he is as anxious as I can be for the protection of child-life; and I have only now to say again, as I said in my speech, that I have not the slightest wish to unduly hurry legistation on this matter, even if it were in my power to do so. I fully and entirely agree with the noble and learned Lord who has just sat down, that any appearance of a desire on the part of this House to hurry legislation of this kind would probably have a most injurious effect upon its prospects in another place. Therefore, I quite thankfully accede to the suggestion which the noble Earl on the Woolsack has made.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: Perhaps I may be allowed to add a few words in explanation. This evidence, to which I have referred, was, of course, taken in the year 1854, but your Lordships will understand that the practice of insuring children's lives had been going on antecedently to that time, and these suspicions, which were largely prevalent, were then carefully examined into by Members of the House of Commons, who were very competent to inquire into the matter, and were decided to be groundless, not upon opinions given in conversation or in leading articles, but upon evidence given before and tested by that Committee of the House of Commons.

Question agreed to.

Bill read 2ª accordingly.

*THE BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH: I beg your Lordships now further to allow the Bill to be referred to a Select Committee, to take evidence and to report thereon to your Lordships' House.

Bill referred to a Select Committee.

CHRIST'S HOSPITAL.

QUESTIONS—OBSERVATIONS.

*VISCOUNT GALWAY, in rising to ask Her Majesty's Government whether the scheme of the Charity Commissioners for the management of Christ's Hospital has the sanction and approval of the present Governors, and whether the 148th clause of the scheme will allow the Charity Commissioners to alter the scheme without obtaining the sanction of Parliament, said: My Lords, I do not desire to enter into the merits or demerits of the case before your Lordships, but simply to ascertain whether the scheme proposed has the consent and approbation of the Governors of Christ's Hospital; and with regard to the second part of the question it seems to me that either the 148th clause is a redundancy if the Commissioners in bringing in another scheme are obliged to lay it on the Table of your Lordships' House—or under it they might effect a great change without the knowledge of Parliament. I beg to ask the question which stands in my name.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK): My, Lords, the scheme to which my noble Friend refers is one which has been a long time maturing; I may almost say for the last 12 years. When it first emanated from the Charity Commission it was considered very carefully by the Education Department, and passed on, as there was an opportunity of taking the opinion of the Judicial Committee. I understand that Committee considered all objections made, sitting for 11 days, and eventually passed the scheme with one exception. The new scheme rcetified in that respect is now before Parliament, and, so far, has passed without opposition in the House of Commons on the part of anyone, except as to a point of detail regarding which a Division was taken the other night—quite a small part of it. With regard to the attitude of the Governors when the scheme was before the Judicial Committee it was opposed by many of the Governors and the Corporation of the City of London, but they have determined now not to oppose the scheme, and, so far as I know, opposition will not be carried into either House of Parliament. At least, I have no knowledge on the subject if that is intended. With regard to the second matter which has been called attention to by my noble Friend, under the 148th clause power is reserved for ordinary alterations to be made when the Governors call upon the Charity Commission to make amendments for the better working of the scheme; not with the view to make it a different scheme, but with a view to make it a scheme which, under the management of the Governors, can be made operative. If the Charity Commissioners should make alterations, there is an appeal to the Court of Chancery provided for. If there should be on the initiation of the Charity Commission a change of scheme it will have to go through all the steps which the scheme itself has gone through.

EDUCATION OF BLIND AND DEAF-MUTE CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL.

(NO. 101.) COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to Order.)

Clause 2.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCOTLAND (The MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN): My Lords, in this clause when the Bill was read the date of the commencement of operation of the Act was not inserted. I beg now to move the insertion of that date, 1stJanuary, 1891.

Amendment proposed, Clause 2, page 1, line 9, after ("the") insert ("first"), and after ("of") insert ("January one thousand eight hundred and ninety-"one").—(The Lord Ker [*M. Lothian.*])

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 4.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN: The Amendments proposed in the clause are simply to give better effect to it than it would have as it now stands. It has been pointed out to me by the Board of Commissioners for Public Works Loans that there would have been some difficulty in carrying out this clause without these Amendments.

Amendments proposed,

In Clause 4, page 2, line 19, after ("district") insert ("and school boards shall have the same power of borrowing, and the Public Works Loan Commissioners of lending, for the purposes of contributing towards or of establishing, building, or enlarging such a school, as is conferred by section forty-five of the Education (Scotland) Act, 1872, with respect to providing or enlarging a school house"); line 20, leave out from ("provided") to ("1875") in line 23 both inclusive.—(The Lord Ker [*M. Lothian*).]

Amendments agreed to.

Report of Amendments thereof to be received to-morrow; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 123.)

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS (SCOTLAND) BILL—(No. 119.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN: My Lords, this Bill is intended to remedy difficulties which have arisen in certain burghs which have adopted a certain number of clauses of the General Police and Improvements (Scotland) Act, 1862. A burgh may adopt either the whole of the Act or certain clauses of it, and it has happened in some cases that only certain clauses of the Act have been adopted. Owing to this, persons who are comprehended in a new Police Burgh, but who are not in the old burgh, have not received the power of voting, although they are liable to taxation, and to remedy that is the main purpose of this Bill. My Lords, Clause 2 effects that object. Clause 3 merely fixes the first election in any burgh which falls under this Act at the same time as those in other burghs which have adopted the General Police Act. Clause 4 refers to matters of detail. Those are the whole of the clauses of the Bill, and I beg now to move that it be read a second time.

Bill read 2ª (according to Order), and referred to the Standing Committee on General Bills.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 16th June, 1890.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 6) BILL.—(*By Order.*)

*(3.10.) Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to move—

"That the Order [June 2nd] that the Bill be committed be read, and discharged, and that the Bill be committed to a Select Committee of Nine Members, Five to be nominated by the House and Four by the Committee of Selection. That all Petitions against the Bill presented Three clear days before the Meeting of the Committee be referred to the Committee; that the Petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, or Agents, be heard against the Bill, and Counsel heard in support of the Bill. That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records. That Three be the quorum."

I have also to move a corresponding Motion in relation to the Pier and Harbour Provisional Order (No. 4) Bill for legalising certain dues and charges in reference to the Scilly Islands. In making these Motions, I am asking the House to sanction some further inquiry into the circumstances and proposals of these Bills, before the assent of Parliament is given to them. I do not ask the House to refuse them altogether, but only to refer them to a Select Committee, and the reasons which induce me to do so are these: in the first place, the circumstances are exceptional, and not of the ordinary nature of the Provisional Order Bills, such as are passed every day without discussion; and secondly, if I may be permitted to refer to the Motion wich I moved upon the Second Reading of the Pier and Harbour Bill——

*The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): No.

*Mr. CHANNING: If the Government dissent, of course I will not, but I think it would expedite business if I were allowed to do so. I will confine myself, then, to the first Bill, and the reason why I desire that it should be referred to a Select Committee is that it sets aside the principles of legislation which was sanctioned in 1888, and again last year, without an adequate cause. As the President of the Local Government Board objects to my mentioning the second Bill, I will defer my observations in regard to it, until I can bring them more regularly before the President of the Board of Trade.

*MR. RITCHIE: I only interposed because it is out of order to discuss another Bill now.

*MR. CHANNING: This Provisional Order Bill has grown out of the 49th section of the Local Government Board Act of 1888, which was passed with the view of giving a separate constitution to the Scilly Islands, and which provides for the performance within the islands of the duties of a County Council. The spirit and letter of the Local Government Act of 1888 provide that the persons elected to the County Council shall have the right of discharging the duty of electing their own Chairman, and the object of Section 49 of the Local Government Act, and of similar clauses in the Scotch Act of last year, was to provide the same machinery, rights, privileges, and powers for outlying county electors. It is obvious that the Scilly Islands could not be included, so far as local government is concerned, with the County Government of Cornwall, and, therefore, it was necessary to secure a separate and distinct Government for these islands. At the same time, I maintain that the Local Government Act never contemplated what this Bill does, namely, the conversion of the Scilly Islands into a Crown Colony with a permanent Chairman. Shetland and Orkney occupy a similar position to the Scilly Islands. They have been given a County Council, but they have a right to choose their own Chairman, and to arrange their own affairs exactly like any other county in England and Scotland. It has not been suggested in regard to those islands that any single individual shall have conferred upon him the rights of a statutory chieftain. The Duke of Sutherland possesses an infinitely stronger claim from his territorial rights in Sutherlandshire than Mr. Dorrien Smith possesses in Scilly, but a suggestion to make the Duke of Sutherland the statutory Chairman of the County of Sutherland would have been scouted. All I ask for is inquiry. In the preamble of the present Bill, at page 4, the lease by which Mr. Dorrien Smith holds the Scilly Islands is referred to, and the rights, "powers," "franchises," and "jurisdictions," which have been handed over to him by the Duchy of Cornwall, and they are specially reserved for Mr. Dorrien Smith under Clause 31 of the schedule. I do not know what the terms of that lease are, and, therefore, I ask for inquiry, in order that we may ascertain whether in any way they confer a right upon Mr. Dorrien Smith to control the electors in the management of their ordinary business, and whether they contravene the rights and privileges which the Act of 1888 confers upon county electors. I shall be told, of course, that the people of the Scilly Islands have not petitioned against this Bill. That is perfectly true; but I venture to think that the House may draw from that very fact some ground for an inquiry into the matter. Certainly the fact is established that the Bill contravenes, without assigning a reason, one of the principles of the Act of 1888. There are one or two matters connected with the history of this proposal which it is desirable that I should mention. When the proposal for giving a County Council to the Scilly Islands was first discussed, the suggestion of Mr. Dorrien Smith was that the Council should not be elected by ballot, but by open Vestry; but the Local Government Board very properly insisted that the elections in the islands should be conducted on the same principle as those upon the mainland, namely, by ballot. I think it may be inferred that the proposal to make Mr. Dorrien Smith permanent Chairman was meant as a *solatium*. It is no secret that in the original draft of the Bill Mr. Dorrien Smith desired to have himself called "lord paramount" of the island, and it was only when it was pointed out that that was a title which would be in conflict with the rights of the Duchy of Cornwall that the claim was withdrawn. This shows, to some extent, how these questions have grown up, and I think I have shown, at all events, a *primâ facie* case for referring the Bill to a Select Committee. It will be said that the inhabitants have not protested against the Bill. Their position is peculiar. Mr. Dorrien Smith is proprietor of the islands, under the Duchy, and his power is absolutely paramount. The people are afraid to oppose his wishes in any respect whatever; but I think the House of Commons, has a right to go into the matter and ascertain what his rights are. In regard to the second Bill, there are one or two questions I would like to put if the right hon. Gentleman would prefer to answer them now; but, if not, I will defer them.

*Mr. RITCHIE: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman had better put them now.

*Mr. CHANNING: They refer to the Pier and Harbour Bill.

*Mr. SPEAKER: As they are not connected with the subject-matter of the Bill now before the House they had better be deferred.

*Mr. CHANNING: Then I will conclude by moving the Motion which stands on the Paper in my name.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Order [2nd June] that the Bill be committed, be read, and discharged, and that the Bill be committed to a Select Committee of Nine Members, Five to be nominated by the House and Four by the Committtee of Selection; that all Petitions against the Bill presented Three clear days before the meeting of the Committee be referred to the Committee; that the Petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, or Agents, be heard against the Bill, and Counsel heard in support of the Bill; that the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records; that Three be the quorum."—(*Mr. Channing.*)

*(3.18.) The SECRETARY to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Long, Wilts, Devizes): I should have no wish to complain of the action of the hon. Member in making this Motion, if he could show that there has been any serious departure from the provisions of the Local Government Act. But I must remind the hon. Member and the House that provisions are contained in that Act for dealing with the special requirements of any district in which it might be necessary to set up a County Council; and an examination into the circumstances of the Scilly Islands showed the framers of the measure that such special powers would be necessary when the time should arrive for establishing a County Council there. It is to meet an anomalous condition of things that such a course has been taken. I cannot help expressing my regret that the hon. Gentleman in moving the Motion, actuated only, as he told the House, by honest and sincere motives for the interests of good Local Government, should have made statements in reference to Mr. Dorrien Smith which, I think, he will find very few people to endorse.

*Mr. CHANNING: Will the hon. Gentleman pardon me? I did not say a single word that could reflect upon the action of Mr. Dorrien Smith. I most fully recognised his efforts to improve the condition of the people of the islands.

*Mr. LONG: The hon. Gentleman said that representations had been made to him which induced him to believe that the people of the islands were in a state of fear, and that they were unable to represent freely their own case. I leave the House to judge for itself whether that does not imply that the government of Mr. Dorrien Smith is of such a nature as to frighten the people of the Scilly Islands. I must, therefore, repeat my regret that the hon. Gentleman was not able to make the Motion without indulging in an imputation of such a nature against Mr. Dorrien Smith. Section 49 of the Local Government Act says that Provisional Orders shall be, as far as possible, in consonance with the principles of the Act, and that is what the present Order is. Anybody who knows the Scilly Islands and has made himself acquainted with the condition of things there will be aware that it is simply ridiculous to say that the position of the Duke of Sutherland in the County of Sutherland can be compared with the position of Mr. Dorrien Smith in the Scilly Islands. The present Provisional Order has passed through all its forms. The hon. Gentleman says that the fact of there having been no Petition against it ought not to weigh on account of the peculiar position occupied by the inhabitants. Now, every provision contained in this Order was laid most carefully before the people of the islands, and every opportunity has been afforded for the presentation of Petitions, and no objection has been raised except by the hon. Gentleman opposite. The hon. Gentleman has not given any ground for departing from the invariable rule in connection with Provisional Order Bills, and the point he has raised could be as well dealt with on the Second Reading as in Committee.

The rights of the county electors in the Island of Scilly will not be in any way interfered with. Mr. Dorrien Smith is practically the Governor of the islands, and anyone who has taken the trouble to visit them must be satisfied that he has done his best for the interests of the inhabitants and that his rule has been a most beneficent one.

(3.30.) MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I gladly recognise the able manner in which the hon. Member for East Northampton (Mr. Channing) has dealt with this matter; but in regard to the remarks which have fallen from the Secretary to the Local Government Board, I think it is desirable to make it quite clear to the House that there are sufficient grounds for our opposition to the Bill in its present form. The hon. Gentleman has complained of the way in which the hon. Member for East Northampton dealt with the matter as far as Mr. Dorrien Smith is concerned; but, after the ample tribute which has been paid to the beneficent action of Mr. Dorrien Smith and his family in connection with these islands, I think it is unfair to take my hon. Friend to task for his reference to the condition of the people of the Scilly Islands, which is undoubtedly an important factor in the case. The hon. Gentleman twits my hon. Friend with having no support from the people, and he says that, being fully cognisant of what was going on, they had an ample opportunity of petitioning. He added that, as they have not done so, it is a proof that they are in favour of the Bill, or that they do not care sufficiently about it to oppose it. I must say that the absence of opposition affords proof, to some extent, that the liberties of the people of these islands are scarcely worth fighting for; but I have had letters from different persons living in Scilly which state that the inhabitants are in a state of fear, and believe that any action on their part would result in their being forced to relinquish their holdings and being turned out of the islands. All I can say is, that if the inhabitants are so timorous and so wanting in pluck it will only serve them right if they suffer in future. They will only have themselves to thank, and nobody else. But, so far as the proposal to establish Mr. Dorrien Smith as the permanent Chairman is concerned, that is a matter

altogether apart from local feeling. It is a distinct departure from a fundamental principle recognised in the Local Government Act, and I failed to find in the speech of the Secretary to the Local Government Board a single justification for this extraordinary departure from the settled policy of the Local Government Act. The only reason assigned by the hon. Gentleman is that Mr. Dorrien Smith is the Governor of the island—an autocrat on whom the welfare, liberties, and prosperity of these people depend. That, I think, is a strong reason why we should not increase and extend the power of this gentleman by constituting him Chairman of the Council and the future controller of their destinies for all time to come.

(3.45.) MR. BOLITHO (Cornwall, St. Ives): Last autumn the Local Government Board sent down an experienced gentleman to inquire into all the circumstances of the case. That gentleman took evidence, and the present Bill is the outcome of his inquiry. No doubt there are anomalies in the case, but the Scilly Islands themselves are an anomaly. For my part, I hold that the Government have been wise in placing a clause in this Bill as an incentive and stimulant to the temporary owner of the property to reside amongst the islanders and give them the benefit of his influence and advice. If any man deserves encouragement and support in connection with the Scilly Islands it is Mr. Dorrien Smith. When he came into this inheritance he found the people in a deplorable and impoverished condition. He has encouraged their industry, especially in the growth of flowers, and they are now frugal, industrious, contented, and prosperous. They are not afraid of speaking their own minds, and I know from experience, that if they felt dissatisfaction, neither Mr. Dorrien Smith nor anybody else would prevent them from expressing it.

(3.50.) The House divided:—Ayes 105; Noes 179.—(Div. List, No. 135.)

*MR. CHANNING: I have a similar Motion on the Paper in regard to another Bill; but, after the Division which has just taken place, I do not propose to proceed with it. I should like, however, to hear from the President of the Board of Trade why the dues on exported shell fish and flowers are not regulated and controlled by the Provisional Order for which the right hon. Gentleman is responsible, and why these dues are left to the absolute discretion of Mr. Dorrien Smith?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): It is impossible in the schedule attached to a Provisional Order to schedule every article, but I believe that in this case the schedule has received the approval of the fishermen themselves. If the hon. Gentleman requires further information, and will put a question upon the Paper, I shall be happy to answer it.

REGISTRARS' FEES (MIDDLESEX).

Address for—

"Return showing for each of years 1888 and 1889, the Fees received by the Registrars of Middlesex, the number of transactions, the expenses of the office, and the net amount paid to the surviving Registrar and to the Queen's Remembrancer (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper) No. 242, of Session 1888)."—(*Sir John Lubbock.*)

EAST INDIA (ACCOUNTS.)

Address for—

"Detailed Particulars respecting the undermentioned Items in the Home Accounts of the Government of India, of which no particulars appear in Parliamentary Paper No. 171, 9th May 1890:—

The Persons to whom payments were made, the Amounts paid in each instance, and the reason for making such payments of Compassionate Allowances, £2,457 14s. 6d. (page 9);

Like information respecting Compassionate and Miscellaneous Pensions, £4,987 7s. 6d., and Gratuities, £585 (page 11);

Like information respecting Gratuities granted on retirement to members of the Uncovenanted Services of India, £2,057 2s. 1d. (page 11); and

The circumstances under which the following Charges were incurred: 'Cost of Stores lost in transit in India,' £7,808 4s. 1d. (page 13)."—(*Mr. Bradlaugh.*)

WHITGIFT HOSPITAL (CROYDON).

Copy ordered—

"Of the Correspondence which has passed between the Charity Commissioners and the Governors of the Whitgift Hospital, Croydon, on the subject of the disallowance by the Commissioners of the amount expended by the Trustees in the restoration of the tomb of Archbishop Whitgift (the founder of the Hospital), in the Parish Church, Croydon."—(*Mr. Spencer Balfour*).

QUESTIONS.

COMMERCIAL TREATIES.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Treaties of Commerce concluded in 1862 and 1865 with Belgium and the German Zollverein preclude the conclusion of any preferential commercial arrangement for mutual advantage between the United Kingdom and Her Majesty's Colonial or Indian possessions, and if these foreign restrictions upon domestic commerce are extended by the most favoured nation agreement to every other foreign State; and in such case if, having regard to the well-known Report of the Privy Council of Canada

> "that trade should be as free as practicable between the various portions of the Empire, having regard solely to their own interests, and unfettered by any obligation to treat others with equal favour,"

as also to repeated expressions of opinion to like effect in the Dominion Parliament, and in Australasia, an undertaking can be given that advantage shall be taken of the opportunity afforded by the forthcoming expiration upon due notice of several foreign Treaties of Commerce to denounce and determine such inter-British commercial disability?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I am not prepared to admit that the Treaties to which the hon. Member refers would have, in all cases, the effect suggested in the first part of his question, but he will find the clauses referred to in the Paper presented to the House of Commons, dated 17th April, 1888. (C 5369.) This Paper also includes a Memorandum by Sir E. Hertslet, on the subject. No doubt this important matter will be considered when new Commercial Treaties are about to be concluded with foreign States.

THE NEW CODE.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, having regard to the limited accommodation afforded by the training colleges in the past, and the admitted excellence and efficiency of large numbers of certificated teachers who have been trained outside those institutions; he will amend the nomenclature and cancel the distinctions of Article 73 of the New Code?

The VICE PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Sir W. Hart Dyke, Kent, Dartford): I have already had regard to the limited accommodation afforded by the training colleges in the past by undertaking that the change shall not be retrospective, and I have recognised the admitted excellence of that large number of certificated teachers who may not enter a training college, by not allowing the distinction, even in the future, to affect the principal teachers, and I am further willing, so far as the difficulty is one of nomenclature, to amend the terms of the Article, and, to that extent, meet the views of the right hon. Gentleman.

MAGISTRATES' CLERKS.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the following remarks by the Lord Chief Justice in delivering judgment: in the recent case of "Dixon *v.* Wells":—

> "A practice seems to have risen up of Magistrates' clerks hearing complaints and taking summonses to any Magistrates to be signed, they being ignorant of the case and not knowing whether there is a *primâ facie* case or not. A looser practice and more likely to lead to injustice I cannot conceive. . . . It may often happen that summonses are issued without any case whatever. I cannot regard a summons so issued in direct defiance of the Act as a summons issued under it."

And whether, especially in the interest of poor persons who cannot pay for professional assistance, he will issue a Home Office Circular to Magistrates' clerks drawing their attention to the matter, and to the observations thereupon of the Lord Chief Justice?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Matthews, Birmingham, E.): I have seen a report of the case in question. I have consulted the best authority within my reach, and I am advised that there is no reason to suppose the law is not well known which makes the issue of a summons an act of judicial discretion, depending on the nature of the information or complaint laid before a Justice, and incapable of being delegated to his clerk or anybody else; and that it would not be desirable to issue any Circular which either limited this discretion or suggested any other rules than those which follow from Jervis's Act.

INDIGENT EMIGRANTS TO AMERICA.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT: I had intended to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to the rejection by America of certain indigent emigrants recently conveyed to New York by the Cunard Steamship Company, and to that line being required by the United States' Authorities to bring them back to Liverpool; and if he can state the nationality of these persons who are unfit for America, and, in the event of their being foreigners, if their repatriation can be effected, having regard to there being less space in the United Kingdom than in America for superfluous foreign workers? At the request of the right hon. Gentleman, I will postpone the question.

ARMOUR PIERCING PROJECTILES.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if the armour-piercing projectiles, which to the amount of £13,080 were last year purchased from foreigners, could have been obtained from Sheffield; if the braid and cloth ordered from abroad, to the extent of £6,367, were unobtainable at Bradford, Huddersfield, or Limerick; and if the wood for £20,654 worth of butts and fore-ends could have been purchased, if not at home, at least within the Empire?

*The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. E. Stanhope, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Special negotiations were entered into with a Sheffield firm for the armour-piercing projectiles, but their terms were too high. Trial orders for braid and cloth are in the hands of English manufacturers, but no progress has been made during the last 11 months, so that we cannot at present get these goods in England. As regards butts and fore-ends of rifles, I regret that at present no walnut has been found of suitable quality, except that which is grown on the Continent of Europe.

In reply to a further question by Mr. Howard Vincent,

*Mr. E. STANHOPE said: The difference in price of the armour-piercing projectiles obtained from foreigners was £14 each. An attempt was made to secure a reduction of price from English firms, but no satisfactory arrangement was made.

THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the London County Council dispute the right of ratepayers or electors to inspect Minutes of proceedings of Committees of the Council, notwithstanding "The Municipal Corporations Act, 1882," Section 233, which gave the right to burgesses to inspect "the Minutes of proceedings of the Council," which was made applicable to County Councils by "The Local Government Act, 1888," on the alleged ground that proceedings of Committees of the Council are not "proceedings of the Council" within the meaning of the Act; whether he is aware that the bulk, or nearly all of the proceedings of the Council, are by Committees of that body, and that such Committees may consist of the whole or parts of the Council; and whether the Local Government Board recognise the above construction of the statute to be correct; and, if so, whether it was intended by the Local Government Act that the ratepayers should have no right to inspect Minutes of proceedings and acts done by the Council by delegation to Committees of the whole or part of their body?

*MR. RITCHIE: I was not aware that the question as to the right of ratepayers or electors to inspect the Minutes of proceedings of Committees of the London County Council had been raised prior to the notice which was given of the question by the hon. Member. I am aware that a large proportion of the proceedings of the County Council are by Committees of that body, but I am informed that all proceedings of Committees which are important are reported to the Council, and that the Minutes containing those Reports are open to the inspection of county electors in London. The view which the County Council have adopted is that the proceedings of Committees of the Council are not proceedings of the Council within the meaning of Section 233 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, which is applied to County Councils by the Local Government Act, and I am advised that this construction of the statute is correct. The County Council in this matter are in the same position as a Municipal Corporation.

THE ZAMBESI.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what was defined to be the eastern boundary of the British sphere of influence south of Zambesi when that sphere of influence was formerly proclaimed: and whether Ngamiland was included in such sphere of influence?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): I understand that my hon. Friend chiefly wishes for information respecting the western boundary. The eastern boundary was the Portuguese Province of Sofala. That on the northwest was, as was stated in the answer of the 13th to Mr. Baumann, only roughly indicated. The question of Ngamiland is under discussion and no opinion can be given.

HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

MR. HANBURY: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies what has been the salary of the High Commissioner for South Africa at various times since the creation of that office; what proportion of it has been paid by the Imperial Government and Cape Colony respectively; and what is the proportion of such payments, and the total salary, at the present time?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): When the High Commissionership was first created the Governor of the Cape, who has always held the appointment, was merely High Commissioner for the tribes on the Eastern frontier. He received £1,000 a year from Cape funds, in addition to £5,000 a year also from Cape funds as Governor. Sir Bartle Frere, who in 1877 was first appointed High Commissioner for South Africa, also received £1,000 a year from Cape funds, as did Sir Hercules Robinson. In 1889 a Cape Act was passed, No. 38 of 1889, increasing the High Commissioner's salary from colonial funds to £3,000 a year. Sir Bartle Frere was paid £1,500 a year as a personal allowance from Imperial funds. Sir Hercules Robinson received and Sir Henry Loch receives £1,000 from the same source. These Imperial allowances were granted in each case upon personal grounds, and do not necessarily attach to the office. The total salary being £9,000, the proportion of the Imperial payments to the total salary at the present time is 1 to 4 if the salary of the High Commissionership is meant, or 1 to 9 if the total emoluments of Sir Henry Loch are meant.

MR. HANBURY: I understand that the result is this, the Colonial Government pays £3,000, and the Imperial Government £1,000.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: Yes, Sir.

SCARCITY OF SMALL SILVER CHANGE.

MR. HERMON-HODGE (Lancashire, Accrington): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the increasing difficulty of getting small silver change, such as sixpences, in London; and whether he is aware that, owing to their bulk, and the difficulty of distinguishing between them, the new 4s. and 5s. pieces are most unpopular, so much so that in some clubs the cashiers rapidly accumulate sums of from £20 to £25 in these coins, of which they cannot get rid?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I am glad that my hon. Friend has asked this question. Yes, Sir, I have heard of the alleged increasing difficulty of getting small silver change, such as sixpences, in London; but I have repeatedly stated in this House that the Government have no means of increasing the amount in circulation. There are at this moment in the Bank of England 3,760,000 shillings and 3,000,000 sixpences ready for circulation. Any bank can obtain them. Clubs, shopkeepers, or individuals have only to ask their bankers to supply them, and they, in their turn, can set them into circulation. With regard to the second question, namely, the crowns and double florins, I am not aware that they are most unpopular, except, possibly, in clubs. On the contrary, large demands continue to be made for them; £70,000 worth were asked for lately within a very few days. If it is said that the cashiers of the clubs cannot get rid of these pieces, but accumulate them to the amount of £20 to £25, I presume that if they keep a good balance at their bankers, and send them these coins, asking the bank to give them shillings and sixpences in exchange, the banks would not be unwilling to oblige such valuable customers.

ADMIRALTY SURVEYS—CASE OF PATRICK LAMB.

MR. WEBB (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether his attention has been drawn to the circumstances narrated in the "Admiralty Surveys Report for 1889," under which last year, at personal loss to himself, Patrick Lamb indicated to the Admiralty Surveyors a rock suspected, but theretofore not located, about 20 miles from Cape St. Mary, Newfoundland; and whether, in view of the statement in the Report that

> "The importance of the knowledge of its existence will be at once seen when it is remembered that many mail steamers pass this way on their course to the St. Lawrence, and that, though in ordinary weather the largest ship would cross it in safety, the heavy seas of an Atlantic gale, in such an exposed position, would infallibly cause her to strike, with, in all probability, immediate foundering as the result,"

Patrick Lamb has received, or will receive, some reward or distinction for his conduct?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): Patrick Lamb has received a reward of £20 from the officer in charge of the survey, in accordance with the invariable practice whenever information is received that leads to the discovery of dangerous rocks, which would otherwise not have been noted on the charts. Many rocks have been noted on the charts in this manner. Each such case is considered on its merits, and in this instance the reward granted was thought to be adequate.

IRELAND—INCOME TAX.

MR. KNOX (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will agree to the Return as to Income Tax (Ireland), which stands on the Paper for to-day?

MR. GOSCHEN: I have made inquiry, and find that the information cannot be obtained. It is not possible, therefore, to give the Return.

SUPPLY OF NEWSPAPERS, &c., TO WORKHOUSES.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Boards of Guardians in Ireland are empowered, as similar Bodies are in England, to defray out of the rates the cost of supplying the inmates of workhouses with newspapers, periodicals, and books; whether he is aware that the President of the Local Government Board in England has directed that the Inspectors of the Local Government Board shall be instructed, in connection with their visits to workhouses, to give this subject their special attention, and to report to the Board as to the views and practice of the Guardians with respect to such supply; whether he will give, if he can do so legally, similar directions to Local Government Board Inspectors in Ireland; and whether, if the law in Ireland is in this respect different from the law in England, the Government will introduce a measure for the assimilation of the law in Ireland to the law in England on this subject?

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I have also to ask whether any expense incurred by Poor Law Guardians in Ireland for the purpose of supplying reading matter to the inmates of workhouses is disallowed by the Auditors of the Local Government Board; and, if this is the case, whether he will take steps to have the Rules of the Local Government Board altered in this particular?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I have ascertained that there is no enactment expressly empowering Boards of Guardians in Ireland to provide the inmates of workhouses with newspapers, periodicals, and books. When such expenditure is incurred, it is a matter for the Auditor to determine if such shall be allowed. The Local Government Board believe that literature of this nature is usually supplied by private contribution. Inquiries will be made, and there is every desire that the practice in Ireland should be on all fours with that in England.

POST OFFICE AT MANOO.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he has considered the Petition presented to him by the inhabitants of Manoo, in the County of Fermanagh, praying for the establishment of a Post Office in their district?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University): I have considered the Petition referred to by the hon. Member, and I should have been glad to comply with it, but I find that the cost involved in the establishment of a Post Office at Manoo would be out of all proportion to the revenue from the six letters a day to be benefited. Under the circumstances, I regret that a Post Office cannot be opened at Manoo. There are three Post Offices Kish, Edeney, and Lisnaritck, within three miles from Manoo.

LIGHT RAILWAYS IN DONEGAL.

MR. DALTON (Donegal, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he can now state the cause of the delay in granting the sum of £116,000, recommended, so strongly by the Light Railway Commissioners, and approved of unanimously by the Grand Jury of the County Donegal at the last Spring Assizes, in favour of the Stranorlar and Glenties line; and whether it is a fact that no objection to the proposed line has been received from any quarter? I also wish to ask whether the Government have yet decided on the route for the North-West Donegal Railway line to Falcarragh; and, if not, will he direct a sworn inquiry to be held at Milford or Ramelton, in order that the inhabitants of these towns might produce evidence in favour of the proposed line from Letterkenny *viâ* Ramelton, Milford, Carrigart, Creeslough, and Dunfanaghy?

MR. LEA (Londonderry): I beg also to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Treasury have decided to give the Donegal and Killybeg Light Railway Company a free grant under "The Light Railways (Ireland) Act, 1889," for the construction of their railway; and, if so, whether a similar grant will at the same time be made to the line from Stranorlar to Glenties, in the same County of Donegal, opening up the congested district of the Barony of Boylagh; whether the last-mentioned line was recommended by the Commissioners appointed under the said Act; and if, under the circumstances, the

Treasury will give at least equal facilities to the Glenties line as to the Killybeg line?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): I can understand the desire of hon. Members and their constituents to know whether light railway schemes affecting their districts are likely to be aided under the Act of last Session. I would point out, however, that the Treasury and the Irish Government are engaged in negotiations and deliberations under quite novel and somewhat difficult circumstances. The fact is, there are more schemes than money, and, therefore, it is necessary that we should proceed very cautiously, in order to select the best schemes, and those which will best meet the requirements of the districts as a whole.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): We have vainly endeavoured to extract some idea as to what month in the coming year it will be possible to get an answer to this important question. The Government have now had nine months to consider the matter; how soon next year may we expect an answer?

MR. JACKSON: I hope within the limit of the time mentioned by the hon. and learned Gentleman to be in a position to give a favourable answer. I am afraid that the answer I have given must cover the other questions upon the same subject which stand on the Paper. Various schemes have been under consideration in regard to West Donegal, but none has yet been authorised.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is it true that there is a considerable amount of friction between the Irish Office and the Treasury on the subject; that the Irish Office take one view and the Treasury another?

MR. JACKSON: I do not like to suggest that that question is in the nature of a fishing inquiry, but there is no ground for it.

CORK LUNATIC ASYLUM.

MR. M. HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the recent Report of the Government Inspectors with reference to the Cork Lunatic Asylum, and to the discussion thereon at the meeting of the Board of Governors on the 10th instant; whether it is the fact, as stated by one of the Governors, that the Asylum was built to accommodate only 500 inmates, and that the number of inmates is now 1,000; whether the Inspectors reported that the Asylum had reached the utmost limit to which it should be allowed to grow, and that every effort should be made to decrease the number of inmates; and whether the Government propose to take any action either as to this portion of the Report, or as to the complaints made in the Report as to want of cleanliness and proper sanitary arrangements in the establishment?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is a fact that the Cork Asylum was originally built to accommodate only 500 patients. But since then, from time to time, very considerable structural additions have been made, though not to an extent sufficient for the accommodation of the present number of inmates which at the beginning of this month was 1,038. The Inspectors did express an opinion to the effect indicated in the third paragraph. The Inspectors' Report is under the consideration of the Government.

IRISH COURT RULES.

MR. HOZIER (Lancashire, S.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether the jurisdiction exercised by the English Courts under the Judicature Rules of 1875 over defendants domiciled in Scotland or Ireland was taken away in 1883; whether a similar jurisdiction is still exercised by the Irish Courts under the Irish Judicature Rules of 1877 over Scotchmen and Englishmen; and whether, if so, Her Majesty's Government will take steps to have the Irish Court Rules assimilated to the English Rules as regards jurisdiction over persons domiciled outside of the ordinary jurisdiction of the Courts?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): The power of the English Courts to order service of a writ on a defendant resident in Scotland or Ireland would appear to have been abridged in one particular class of cases only by the Rules of 1883, namely, in actions for the breach of contract, which, according to the terms thereof, ought to be performed in England. No similar restriction was made by the Rules of the Irish Court, but by the 33rd section of the

Irish Judicature Act it is enacted that whenever application is to be made for leave to serve a defendant resident out of the jurisdiction

> "the Court or Judge to whom such application shall be made shall have regard to the amount or value of the claim or property affected, and to the comparative cost and inconvenience of proceedings in Ireland or in the place of the defendant's residence, &c., and no such leave is to be granted without an affidavit giving the necessary information on those points."

I am informed that the Irish Rules are at present under revision by the Judges of the Supreme Court, who have the whole question of the Rules of Court for that country under their consideration.

EVICTIONS AT FALCARRAGH.

Mr. DALTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has sanctioned the employment of the Forces of the Crown for the eviction of 46 families on the Stewart and Swineys estates, in the Falcarragh district of the County Donegal; whether any of the evictions have yet been carried out; whether he can state the total number of persons who will be rendered homeless by the eviction of these 46 families; whether this district is one comprised within the congested districts proposed to be dealt with by a Bill now before the House; whether any of these people have been the recipients within the past year of relief in the shape of seed potatoes; and whether, under all the circumstances of the case, and in view of the fact that eviction at this time of the year will deprive these families of the crops now in the ground, and thereby deprive them of their only means of subsistence during the coming winter, the Government propose to take any steps to avert the danger of famine to these people during the coming winter?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: With respect to the inquiries in paragraphs one and four, I beg to refer to my reply on these points to the question put on the subject by the hon. Member for South Donegal on the 9th inst. Up to June 14, 25 of these evictions had, I understand, been concluded, and it was expected that five more would have been carried out that day. The Report before me does not show the number of persons comprised in each family to be evicted. I am informed that none of these people have been recipients during the past year of relief in the shape of seed potatoes, neither are there any crops planted on the farms from which they have been evicted, nor is there any reason to expect famine as suggested in the question.

In answer to a further question by Mr. Dalton,

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said: Protection has been applied for and granted in respect of the execution of eviction decrees in the case of certain tenants on the Olphert estate, where the Plan of Campaign is in operation. I am informed that these tenants have not been the recipients of relief for their families, or of seed to crop their land in the last 12 months.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Is it true that an old woman of 80, who was unable to make her way outside, was treated with brutal violence?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no Report that confirms that statement, but I shall be glad to inquire.

LADY BURNETT SCHOOL, BANCHORY.

Mr. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to a scheme for the future administration of the Lady Burnett School, Banchory, sanctioned 24th February, part of which is to provide additional accommodation; whether he is aware that there is a public school within half a mile, with accommodation for 340, with an attendance of only 160; whether the School Board of Banchory has been consulted by the Department before this expenditure for additional accommodation was sanctioned; whether, with one exception, the whole members of the Banchory School Board are opposed to the extension of the Lady Burnett School as unnecessary and wasteful; and whether, in the circumstances, any steps will be taken to remedy the evil complained of?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. Robertson, Bute): I am acquainted with the scheme for the administration of the Lady Burnett School. The additional accommodation for which the scheme makes provision, consists of a class-room, the necessity for which was repeatedly urged by Her Majesty's Inspector, not in order to increase the attendance, but in order to provide for the satisfactory teaching of the numbers actually attending. The endowment was under private Trustees, and the Department could only approve of a scheme with their assent, and on their initiative. The School Board had no control whatever over the funds of the endowment, nor any share in the management of the school. The objection of the School Board was known to my Lords only after the scheme had been approved. My Lords do not think that the additional accommodation ought in any way to interfere with the public school, but they are now in correspondence with a view to restricting the attendance at the Lady Burnett School to girls and boys under a certain standard, so as to prevent such interference.

THE LOSS OF THE *NESTA*.

Mr. NEVILLE (Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether it is a fact that the captain, officers, and the crew of the *Nesta*, which was run into and sunk by H.M.S. *Surprise*, obtained, as their proportion of the amount paid by the Admiralty £162 in respect of their claims of £1,083 17s. 10d. for lost effects; and whether the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty can allow some further compensation to these men?

Lord G. HAMILTON: The total sum paid by the Admiralty by way of compensation for the loss of the *Nesta* was £8,250, or the maximum amount claimable under the "Merchant Shipping Act of 1862." This sum was paid to the owners, and they distributed it as they thought right. No further compensation can be paid in this case, as I think ample compensation has already been paid.

ARMY PENSIONS—CASE OF MICHAEL STANLEY.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been drawn to the case of an old soldier, named Michael Stanley, who, having served in the Crimea in 1854, and afterwards in India during the Mutiny, in the 3rd European Light Cavalry, was afterwards sent to British North America and Jamaica, where he contracted fever and ague, from the effects of which he is still suffering; whether he is aware that Stanley is deaf and unable to work, and has spent most of his time during the last few years in the workhouse; and whether he has applied to the War Office for his deferred pension, and has been refused; and, if so, on what grounds?

*Mr. E. STANHOPE: Stanley did not fulfil the conditions entitling a soldier to a deferred pension, but his case is being referred to the Chelsea Commissioners in order to ascertain if anything can be done for him.

THE LAND COMMISSION.

Mr. M. HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the delay which takes place in the offices of the Land Commission; if he is aware that a letter addressed to the Secretary is hardly ever answered under three weeks or a month; that copies of fair rent and other orders and of valuers' and Sub-Commissioners' Reports cannot be obtained without prolonged delays; that the Land Commission have now a printed form of circular in which they apprise persons requiring such copies that, owing to press of business, a long delay must elapse before they will be ready; and whether some additional clerical assistance could be provided?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners report that no delay which can be avoided occurs in their offices, and that the statements in the second paragraph of the question appear to be made under some misapprehension. They state that, as a rule, copies of documents are furnished within a few days after applied for, and that only in exceptional circumstances have any delays occurred. At times as many as 1,000 requisitions are received within a few days, in which case the circular referred to is issued. It does not state that "a long time must elapse," but that a little time may, before the application can be complied with. Any exceptional influx of business of this nature is met by the clerical staff working overtime, and I am not aware that there is any necessity for the course suggested in the last paragraph.

Mr. M. HEALY: Have the Land Commission made application for additional clerical assistance?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think not. I do not gather from the Report that they deem the staff inadequate.

POLICE DOCTORS.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the office of doctor to the police at Kilconnell, New Inn, and Woodlawn Police Stations (County Galway), held until his death by the dispensary doctor (Dr. Deely), has now been divided, Dr. Rutherford being appointed to Kilconnell, Dr. O'Farrel to New Inn, and Dr. Leonard to Woodlawn; why Dr. M'Merney, who succeeded Dr. Daly as dispensary doctor, and who applied to be appointed police doctor, got neither of the three stations, though he lives within two miles of each of the three, whereas Dr. Rutherford lives at Ballinasloe, eight miles from Kilconnell, Dr. O'Farrell at Loughrea, 10 miles from New Inn, and Dr. Leonard at Athenry, 18 miles from Woodlawn; whether there is any question as to Dr. M'Merney's qualifications and capacity to discharge the duties of police doctor; whether he is aware that frequent complaints have been made recently as to the irregularity of the visits of Dr. Rutherford, who holds the appointment of visiting physician to Ballinasloe Lunatic Asylum, that Dr. O'Farrell is the son of a local Crown prosecutor, and has never previously held any public appointment, and that Dr. Leonard is over 70 years of age; and why the ordinary practice of appointing the dispensary doctor police doctor, till recently a rule of the force, has been departed from in this case?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that the facts are as stated in the first three paragraphs, except that Dr. Leonard resides at a distance of only 12 miles by train from the place mentioned. The public service will not be served by discussing the qualifications of individual candidates. No complaints have been received as to the appointment of Dr. Leonard, who is not over 70, but only 61 years of age. Dr. O'Farrell, for the last two and a half years, has been a Constabulary Medical Attendant. The rules referred to in the last paragraph were abolished in 1883, and no such rule is now in existence.

MR. M. HEALY: Will not the right hon. Gentleman interfere, and see that a doctor living on the spot is appointed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not see why I should interfere with the Constabulary Authorities in the exercise of their discretion.

MR. M. HEALY: Was not Dr. M'Merney passed over because he is a Nationalist?

[No reply.]

ISSUE OF SUMMONSES AT CORK.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is true, as reported in the Cork papers, that summonses were last week issued at the prosecution of District Inspector Ball, Fermoy (County Cork), against Patrick Keefe, Thomas Kent, William Kent, George Mulcahy, John Fuohy, Patrick Walsh, John Donovan, and James Donovan; if he can state whether these prosecutions are brought with the approval or sanction of the Irish Law Officers; and whether he is aware that of the above-named defendants two of them, namely, Thomas and William Kent, are at present confined in Cork Gaol for offences arising out of the alleged boycotting of a farm in connection with which these summonses are now issued?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that the legal proceedings referred to are still pending. It would therefore not be proper for me to make a statement on the subject.

MR. FLYNN: Why did the police institute these prosecutions instead of the owner of the farm who was entitled to do so?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no information on that subject. If the hon. Gentleman will put a question on the Paper I will ascertain.

LICENSING REGISTERS.

MR. SUMMERS (Huddersfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the clerks of Licensing Magistrates are compelled by law to keep a register of the names of the owners of the freehold of licensed premises, and of the persons to whom licences have been granted; and, if so, whether he will cause a Return to be prepared of the owners and occupiers of licensed premises in each city, municipal borough, and Petty Sessional Division respectively, in England and Wales?

MR. MATTHEWS: I suppose the hon. Member to refer to the register provided for by Section 36 of the Licensing Act of 1872. That register does not necessarily show the name of the freeholder. A Return such as the hon. Member suggests could be obtained only by applying to all the clerks to Licensing Justices throughout the Kingdom would take a long time to obtain and present, and would, in my opinion, be of doubtful utility.

MR. STOREY (Sunderland): Might I call the attention of the Home Secretary to the fact that Clause 6 of the Bill we are now discussing turns upon the compensation to owners, and Amendments have been put down dealing with the case of the occupier? How can the House fairly discuss this question as between owner and occupier unless the Government furnish us with the information which is in their hands as to owners and occupiers? On a recent occasion I asked the First Lord of the Treasury this question, and showed him the very Return we are now asking for in connection with Sunderland.

MR. MATTHEWS: I have pointed out to the hon. Member that the Return could only be made with great difficulty. If, however, it is possible to get the information in time for the discussion it shall be done.

MR. STOREY: I shall be very glad to show the right hon. Gentleman a copy of the register kept by all clerks to the Licensing Justices.

IRISH PUBLIC WORKS.

MR. FOLEY (Galway, Connemara): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether any money, and, if so, how much, has been expended in Ireland up to the present time in pursuance of the policy of the Government, announced by the Member for South Paddington, when Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the House in 1886, and of the Report of the Royal Commission on Irish Public Works which was made the same year; and whether the Treasury are committed to any expenditure in pursuance of the recommendations of the Royal Commission; and, if so, to what extent and on what works, and when are the works likely to be commenced, and if the construction of the line from Galway to Clifden is included in any such expenditure?

MR. JACKSON: It would not be possible for me to give a precise answer to the first part of the hon. Member's question. Such information could only be given after very careful inquiry, in answer to specific heads of inquiry. I presume, however, that the hon. Member desires to know whether a railway from Galway to Clifden is to be made. I am not able to answer this question at present, beyond saying that such a line is within the list of those scheduled by the Government, and I hope it may be found possible to make satisfactory arrangements for the making and working of such a line.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I do appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to give some exact answer to the question. These questions are put down day after day, and we are unable to extract any answer from the Government. Surely it is possible to say how many millions of money have been spent upon public works since that celebrated declaration of policy.

DR. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): Has a single shilling been spent on works?

MR. JACKSON: It is not possible for me to give any accurate information on such short notice on a question of this kind. There might be a difference of opinion as to whether certain expenses are in pursuance of the policy of the Government announced in 1886. I am perfectly willing to give any information that I can if the hon. Member will put his question in a form which can be answered.

DR. KENNY: Has any money at all been expended? That is a specific question.

MR. JACKSON: Yes; I certainly can say that some money has been expended in connection with the preparation of certain schemes for drainage in Ireland. The Bills were introduced last Session, but the Government were unable to pass them.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Has there not been an expenditure on the drainage of the Suck?

MR. JACKSON: A Bill has been passed authorising the expenditure of a contribution of £50,000.

DEDUCTIONS FROM MINERS' WAGES.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that at some coal mines in Yorkshire the deductions made from the coal getter's wage, under "The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887," Section 14, Subsection 2, are often in excess of the amount actually paid to the checkweigher; and whether he will instruct the Inspector of Mines to inquire and report as to the disposal of any surplus?

MR. MATTHEWS: So far as any information has reached me, I gather that at the request of the men employed at certain collieries in Yorkshire, the owners have been in the habit of making certain deductions from the wages of the men, which have been handed over to the treasurer of the men for the purpose of paying the expenses of the checkweigher as authorised by the Coal Mines Regulation Act. With regard to any surplus moneys arising out of such transactions, that is a matter to be dealt with by mutual arrangement between the owners and the men, and is not one in which I have any power to interfere.

NEW TIPPERARY.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether a body of people, who had assembled in New Tipperary on Wednesday last, and had lighted a bonfire to express their joy at Mr. O'Brien's marriage, were charged and batoned by the police, who extinguished the fire and carried off a flag which the people had set up; and, if so, on what grounds they acted? I should also like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, on the occasion of this charge, when the police batoned these people, they struck two women; whether, on the flagstaff having been thrown down into the fire, a woman who was endeavouring to extinguish it was struck by a policeman; whether it it is true that a policeman presented a revolver in the face of a man who was standing inside his own hall-door; and whether the flagstaff, having been re-erected by the Nationalists, has been again cut down by the police?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: With regard to the various supplementary questions, I shall be glad to give the hon. Member any information if he will put them on the Paper. I may say, however, that I gather that the flagstaff the hon. Member alluded to was not in the same place as the bonfire, but in another part of the town. With regard to the question on the Paper, I am informed that fires were lighted in the public streets and caused obstruction. It is not the case that people were charged and batoned; as a matter of fact, no batons were drawn by the police.

MR. SEXTON: Did the Local Body of Town Commissioners raise any objection to the celebration?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know that they did, but I imagine the police in the ordinary discharge of their duty would not wait for such a representation.

MR. DILLON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that is the common practice to light bonfires at night in country towns in Ireland, and can there be any obstruction of the streets when the entire population of the town, without exception, are parties to the lighting of the fire?

MR. PARNELL (Cork): Does the right hon. Gentleman approve of brutal treatment merely for the purpose of putting out a bonfire?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot regard as brutal the putting out of lighted bonfires in the public streets. Of course, if the entire population are engaged in having an evening round the bonfire, it cannot be said they were incommoded by it. But there may have been persons in the town who were not parties to what was going on.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): Were not the bonfires lighted after dark, when all traffic was ended?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know what the practice may be in country towns in Ireland, but certainly the practice in England is to light bonfires after dark. But traffic in England is not ended after dark.

MR. DILLON: Has the right hon. Gentleman ever been in an Irish country town?

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): Was not the reason for the police putting the bonfire out that it was lit in honour of Mr. O'Brien's marriage?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; I think not.

CATHOLIC CHAPLAINS IN SCOTCH POOR HOUSES.

Mr. J. WILSON (Lanark, Govan): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether it is lawful for Parochial Boards in Scotland (should they deem it expedient) to appoint a Roman Catholic chaplain in poorhouses in Scotland, and to allow him a suitable remuneration, or whether it is illegal to appoint as chaplain any person other than a clergyman of the Established Church?

Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: There is no statutory provision on this subject; but I am not prepared to say that it would be illegal for a Parochial Board to remunerate a Roman Catholic clergyman for his attendance on inmates of that persuasion in cases where the number of such inmates is considerable.

POLICE SHADOWING IN IRELAND.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, on the 23rd ultimo, two policemen named respectively Gurry and Linane, followed Mr. John Cullinane, Mr. R. Frewen, and Mr. B. Gill into the shop of Mr. J. A. Carew, of Tipperary; that when they retired into an inner room they were again followed by the policemen; also when they proceeded upstairs to the private drawing room, on the invitation of the proprietor, the policemen followed, and burst in the door which had been closed against them, and remained in the room for the time of 25 minutes against the protests of the proprietor of the house, using insulting language; and by what authority do the police follow these gentlemen, and had they any warrant for breaking open the door of the house?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The two policemen referred to entered the house because Cullinane is a man who is actively engaged in organising boycotting and other illegal practices in the district. The shop referred to is a public house. The police did not enter into any private room, but that part of the house which is open to the public. They did not burst in any door, neither was any insulting language used by them.

Mr. DILLON: On what ground does the right hon. Gentleman state that Mr. Cullinane is actively engaged in organising boycotting in that district?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: He is not only engaged in illegal practices, but I believe he is the paid agent for these purposes of an Organisation with which the hon. Member is connected.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: What reason has the right hon. Gentleman for stating that Mr. Cullinane is the paid agent of an organisation engaged in boycotting?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Reasons which I believe to be adequate.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: Will the right hon. Gentleman state them to the House?

[No answer was given.]

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: I will now ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether complaints have reached him that on the 7th inst. when Mr. Gill, Mr. John Kelly, Mr. O. B. Dalton, and Mr. Cullinane stood on the street of Tipperary to ask Mr. Ronan, Chairman of the Town Commissioners, how his sick child was, two policemen named Gurry and Linane stood between them and remained there in spite of those gentlemen's protests; that when they went into the shop of Mr. Ronan to pursue their inquiries, the police tried to force their way in against the protest of Mr. Ronan's relative, Mr. Kernick, to whom they said, "How dare you talk to us, you puppy;" and subsequently they followed, using such language as, "We are in nice company now," "Don't mind that class," "Go on Jack, we know you," "Get on Gill, we know your character;" and if he can state how long it is intended that these gentlemen shall be thus followed by the police?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that the constables mentioned were following Mr. Cullinane in consequence of the active part he is taking in organising boycotting and other illegal practices in the districts. The police state that they did not interfere with the conversation, nor is it the case that they attempted to enter the house, as alleged. They also state that no protest was made to them by any of Mr. Ronan's relatives, and that the language attributed to them is without the slightest foundation.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Cannot the constabulary be instructed to keep away 10 yards or so, which would prevent their hearing the conversation?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There is no desire to make the following by the police unnecessarily disagreeable—quite the contrary; but if conversation, organising, and boycotting are permitted in the public streets, the following would be rendered useless.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Are we to understand that the instructions to the constabulary are that they are to keep within earshot?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should think that depends on the character of each case.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: When the right hon. Gentleman stated that the police did not interfere with the conversation of gentlemen in Tipperary, did he mean that with a policeman stationed on his right hand and another on his left a gentleman's conversation is not interfered with?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think I made the statement suggested by the hon. Gentleman. I said that no unnecessary interference was intended.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is it left to the discretion of the policemen to decide whether they shall remain within earshot of those whom they are following?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should think not; I imagine that those who give the constabulary instructions would take notice of the particular circumstances of each case.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: Will the right hon. Gentleman reply to the last part of my question?

MR. CONDON (Tipperary, E.): Were specific instructions given to the Police Authorities to shadow my wife and another lady in Cashel, and to detail men to walk side by side with them?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I only lay down general lines of policy in the matter. With regard to the last paragraph of the question on the Paper, of course these gentlemen would not be followed if they gave any indication whatever that they proposed to abstain from boycotting.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: If affidavits are sworn to the effect that the language stated in the question was used by the police, will the right hon. Gentleman take notice of it?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will take notice of any matter to which my attention is called.

MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I will ask whether the right hon. Gentleman has been advised by the Irish Law Officers of the Crown that the police are legally entitled to follow about persons against whom they have no warrants, and against whom no proceedings whatever have been taken?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I apprehend that the manner in which the police are carrying out their duties is perfectly legal.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: That is not what I asked. Has the right hon. Gentleman been advised by the Law Officers of the Crown that this course is legal?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the right hon. Gentleman means to ask whether I have, in a formal manner, obtained the opinion of the Law Officers, I must remind him that it is contrary to the universal practice to make public the confidential reports of the Law Officers. But if he means to ask whether I have taken pains to satisfy myself that the course pursued by the police in Ireland is legal, I have so satisfied myself.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: That was not my question. I am aware that it is not customary to give the House the confidential opinions of the Law Officers of the Crown, but it is customary to tell the House whether the Law Officers have been consulted.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to ask whether I have had a case stated for the opinion of the Irish Law Officers?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: Yes; that is my question.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not had the opinion of the Law Officers on a case stated, and it is not usual to have a case stated unless there is some doubt as to the legality. I have taken pains to convince myself that there is no doubt, and, therefore, I have not made a formal request to have a case stated.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): Will the right hon. Gentleman lay the instructions issued to the police on the Table of the House?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course, as the right hon. Gentleman well knows, it depends on the facts of each particular case what course is pursued, and I apprehend that there is no general regulation covering the peculiarities of each case.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I understood the right hon. Gentleman to say he had given such instructions?

MR. T. M. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman stated he had himself given general instructions. I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman will state what those instructions are?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am responsible for the general course pursued by the constabulary in Ireland, and I have no desire in any way to minimise that responsibility; but I am, naturally, not consulted as to the particular course to be taken by particular constables in proceedings with regard to particular individuals.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman add to his general instructions a direction to the effect that the constables are to keep out of ear-shot. That is a most vital question?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir. I am desirous of limiting as far as possible this method of dealing with crime, and I shall be most glad——

MR. DILLON: You have no right to call it crime.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: And I shall most gladly take advantage of any presumption that may arise in favour of any individual who is shadowed; but, having in view the terrible suffering produced by wholesale boycotting, I cannot undertake altogether to dispense with it.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I will ask whether Mr. M'Crae, of Dundee, has been shadowed from Newbridge to Clongorey, and whether the right hon. Gentleman has any reason to suspect Mr. M'Crae of crime?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have never heard of Mr. M'Crae. It may argue myself unknown.

MR. GILL (Louth, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman state to the House in what manner this shadowing operates to prevent boycotting?

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will order the police in Ireland to discontinue the system of shadowing individuals? In asking this let me express a hope that as the right hon. Gentleman admits himself having directed this system, he will, after the Debate that has taken place, order it to be discontinued?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know that I can do more than repeat the answer I have just given. No individuals are "shadowed" in Ireland unless they are known to be actively engaged in promoting boycotting and intimidation, or other crime. I am desirous, as far as possible, of limiting this method of dealing with crime, and will most gladly take advantage of any presumption that may arise in favour of any individuals so shadowed; but, having in view the terrible suffering produced by wholesale boycotting, I cannot undertake altogether to dispense with it.

MR. DILLON: Then I say it is a brutal and abominable outrage, and if there is bloodshed it will rest on your head.

MR. PARNELL: The right hon. Gentleman said he would gladly take advantage of any presumption in favour of the people who are shadowed. Will he also take advantage of the English presumption that every person accused of crime is innocent until he is proved to be guilty?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Will the hon. Gentleman undertake that these people will not repeat the crime?

MR. DILLON: The right hon. Gentleman has no right to charge us with having committed crime.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. DILLON continued to address the House, but the uproar was so great that what he said did not reach the Reporters' Gallery. He was, however, understood to say:—The right hon. Gentleman has accused men of crime who are as innocent as the right hon. Gentleman himself is of crime. I ask him whether he will stand up and apologise to me for what he has said?

MR. J. O'CONNOR: The right hon. Gentleman ought to apologise.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. DILLON: He must apologise to me.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is committing a breach of order which, in his excitement, possibly he has not noticed. But I am bound to point out to the House that when I rise it is customary for hon. Members to resume their seats. I was only going to observe that this series of questions are taking rather an argumentative form, and are really becoming a sort of Debate which gives rise to great excitement.

MR. GILL: Balfour should not tell lies.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If I am at all responsible for producing the condition of heat in which the House finds itself by the character of my answers I greatly regret it, and I will substitute for the word "crime" the words "boycotting" and "intimidation." I have no doubt as to the description that should be applied to those offences; but as the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down does not consider those offences to be crimes, I will substitute the words themselves.

SIR G. TREVELYAN: With regard to this new method of shadowing, which the right Gentleman says is for the purpose of preventing intimidation, I will ask him whether he proposes to apply it to the land agents who are suspected of putting pressure on tenants under threat of eviction to agree to buy under the Ashbourne Act.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should be glad to stop intimidation in Ireland by whomsoever or on whomsoever. With regard to the statement that "shadowing" is a new practice, I understand that it was largely indulged in by the right hon. Gentleman himself when he was Chief Secretary.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): Will the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to lay on the Table an account of the cases in which the practice was indulged in by his predecessors?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will consider it.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: As the right hon. Gentleman has withdrawn the word "crime," perhaps he will find it consistent with good taste to apologise for the insult offered.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I did not withdraw the word "crime." I stated that the offences against which this practice was used were largely boycotting and intimidation. I consider these to be serious crimes, but I was unwilling to beg the question by the use of a particular term.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I may ask whether, in view of the extraordinary excitement manifested by the Front Opposition Bench on this matter, the right hon. Gentleman or the Home Secretary can state whether this shadowing was not indulged in after the disturbances in London two years ago; and whether, on that occasion, the Front Opposition Bench gave tongue at all?

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I rise to order. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Gill) has several times accused the right hon. Gentleman of telling lies.

*MR. SPEAKER: I am not aware of such observations made across the floor of the House, but if they were made, I should consider them as being highly un-Parliamentary; and, in the interests of order, if any further information is desired I appeal to the House that it may be asked for in the form of regular questions, so that conduct which is improper and unbecoming may be avoided.

THE EARL OF CAVAN (Somerset, S.): As shadowing has been customary in the case of deputations sent over to Ireland from England will the right hon. Gentleman take care that in the case of the other deputations, against the members of which no offences are alleged, there shall be no renewal of this practice?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the noble Lord is mistaken in supposing that the deputations have been shadowed. I rather think too much importance has been attached to their proceedings.

MR. DILLON subsequently rose and said: I apologise to you, Mr. Speaker, and express my regret for not resuming my seat. I was labouring under very great irritation at the time.

THE IRISH CONSTABULARY FORCE.

MR. PARNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what steps he proposes to take upon the definite and categorical charges of misconduct, violence, and cruelty advanced against members of the Irish Constabulary Force on duty at Cashel, on Tuesday the 27th ultimo and succeeding days, by the Cashel Town Commissioners, in a Report of that body, an abstract of which was forwarded on Friday last to him? I may say that I have received a telegram from the Town Clerk of Cashel saying he can produce persons to give evidence who took no part in the meeting, and also adding he is authorised to state that the Commissioners whose names are not appended to the Report were from home when the signatures were affixed, or they would have signed it.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not seen the Report of the Cashel Town Commissioners to which the hon. Gentleman refers; but I am obliged to his courtesy for sending me an abstract of it. I do not know that it is necessary for me to give any answer to his question beyond that which I gave in answer to a similar question put by him on Thursday last. But I would point out to him that in two, at least, cases of alleged violence on the part of the police the name of the constable incriminated appears to be known. Under these circumstances, it is open to the persons aggrieved either to bring an action or to prosecute. My right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General has before him papers relating to the alleged action of the Member for East Tipperary, and is considering whether there is evidence requiring him to institute proceedings against him. It is possible, therefore, that there may be legal inquiry bearing upon the Report of the Town Commissioners, on which they will be able to give evidence upon oath.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Is it not the case that when such an action was brought the Court of Appeal reversed the decision of the Exchequer Division and changed the venue to the North of Ireland?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: In connection with this disturbance, has any person been treated in hospital or infirmary either in Tipperary or Cashel?

Mr. SEXTON: Have not 16 or 17 specific charges of misconduct been made against the police by the Commissioner of the town? I should like to draw attention to the facts of one charge, namely, that strange policemen, who were imported, had their numbers removed from their uniforms so as to prevent identification. Does not this show collusion between individual constables and the Government?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that some eight constables imported from Waterford did have their numbers removed. In boroughs the police are numbered. I cannot say I think the proceeding was wise.

Mr. Parnell

Mr. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman take care that his views are communicated to the officer responsible for the act?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: He will see my answer in the Press. As to the question of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, I will make inquiries. So far as my knowledge goes, nobody has had to remain in hospital.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the police officers in Ireland, like himself, affect not to read the newspapers?

Mr. CLANCY: If actions are brought against the police will the Government defray the cost of the defence?

Mr. M. HEALY: And will the right hon. Gentleman undertake that the Bench trying the case shall not be packed with his Removables?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I imagine the cases would go before a Jury, and not before Resident Magistrates.

Mr. CLANCY: But do the Government intend to bear the cost of defending the police?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot answer that question without notice. Probably, if the prosecutions were successful, the Government would not. The ordinary course will be pursued.

Mr. PARNELL: Will the Government undertake not to pay the cost of defending the police?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I can only repeat that the ordinary course will be pursued.

IRELAND—CENTRAL CONSTABULARY BARRACKS, BELFAST.

Mr. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury when the money for the erection of Central Police Barracks in Belfast was voted; when the agreement with the Corporation of Belfast for the site was completed; and whether the work of erection has yet begun; and, if not, what is the cause of the delay?

*Mr. JACKSON: Funds are provided in the Estimates for the current year; but have not yet been voted. The agreement for the acquisition of the site has not yet been completed, and as possession cannot be obtained till the 30th November next, the works cannot be begun.

WOOLWICH ARSENAL.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I wish to ask the Secretary of State for War whether a pattern maker named Barton, till recently employed in the Woolwich Arsenal, was discharged on the 3rd June, at one day's notice, on the ground of alleged slackness of work, without any extra pay or other compensation; how long had the man been employed in the Arsenal; did he, in the course of his work, receive severe injuries, which caused the loss of two fingers of his left hand, some 13 months ago; is it not the practice that when men have to be discharged for slackness of work at the Arsenal those who have met with accidents are by preference retained; whether, after his accident, a foreman sent for him and requested him to sign papers debarring him from receiving compensation for his injuries, and on the man asking what compensation he would receive that information was refused; what time was allowed him for deliberation or consultation with his friends as to whether he would be well advised in signing for or against compensation; did the fact that this man took the chair at a meeting in support of Mr. Martin Edmunds, the Liberal candidate for Woolwich, and formed a Union of Arsenal Labourers, constitute an offence in the eyes of the Arsenal Authorities; and whether he will now consider Barton's case, with a view to his reinstatement or compensation for the injuries he has received?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The pattern-maker, named Barton, was discharged as stated with other men, after a service of one year and eight months. Thirteen months ago he lost the little finger of his left hand. There is no rule as to the retention of men who have met with accidents. Barton was discharged in a necessary reduction as one of the men with shortest service, and therefore least claim to be retained. At the time of his accident he was, according to custom, called upon to decide whether he would continue on his then rating or accept a reduced rating and have his case put forward for compensation. He was given the remainder of the day for decision. As to this, I may perhaps explain that if a man continues able to earn his full wages the Treasury will not regard it as a case for compensation. The fact of the man taking the chair at a political meeting was not even known to the authorities in the Arsenal. It is not considered that Barton has any claim on the Department.

MEETINGS OF POST OFFICE *EMPLOYÉS.*

MR. CONYBEARE: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether the invitation of a Member of Parliament by Post Office *employés* to assist them in their deliberations at a meeting otherwise legitimate will constitute a breach of the Rules of the Service?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University): As I have stated more than once, one of the conditions on which I relaxed the Rule respecting meetings concerning official questions outside the Post Office buildings, was that they should be confined to Post Office servants, and to those Post Office servants only, who were directly interested in the matter or matters to be discussed. I must leave it to the hon. Member's own intelligence to decide for himself whether it would be in accordance with this condition to invite a Member of Parliament to attend.

MR. CONYBEARE: As the right hon. Gentlemen's answer precludes hon. Members from attending these meetings, I beg to ask whether he proposes to take any action against some two or three hundred Post Office officials, whom I had the honour of addressing at the Southwark Radical Club last night?

*MR. RAIKES: I must ask for notice of that question.

MR. CONYBEARE: Is the right hon. Gentleman able to state what hon. Member or Members it was, and when he alleges that they at any meetings incited Post Office *employés* to contravene the Rules of the Service?

MR. RAIKES: I do not remember making any such statement. I said that I hoped I might rely on the co-operation of hon. Members not to do such a thing.

IRELAND—CHARGES AGAINST THE POLICE.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether civil processes for damages have been issued by Mr.

Thomas Barry, P.L.G., against District Inspector Ball and Sergeant R.I.C., Currabeha, Fermoy, in which the defendants are charged with assaulting and wounding the plaintiff; and whether, since plaintiff announced his intention of proceeding by civil bill for the assault, he has been served with a summons for having obstructed the police?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As legal proceedings are pending it would not be proper for me to enter into details of the case, though I may say that the Report I have received does not agree with the allegation in the question.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is this man to be kept in gaol in order to prevent him proceeding with his case?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No doubt every facility would be given him.

MR. CLANCY: Is this one of the cases in which the Government will defend the police?

MR. T. M. HEALY: The point is this· This person was assaulted by the police, and he took proceedings in order to vindicate himself. The police retaliated by prosecuting him. Now, I ask what are the dates of the respective proceedings?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. and learned Member knows he can easily ascertain the dates for himself.

MR. FLYNN: Has this man been served with a summons under the Crimes Act?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot say. I will ascertain.

IRISH DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the correspondence between the Grand Jury of the County of Cork and the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland on the subject of the nomination by the Grand Jury of representatives on the Board of the District Lunatic Asylum?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There is no object to be gained by such a course. The Grand Jury were entitled to 11 representatives. They submitted 20 names to the Lord Lieutenant from among which their representatives might be selected.

Mr. Flynn

THE CHARGE AGAINST SERGEANT LORD.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in the Report furnished to him in the case of charges of forgery and fraud made by John Maher, of Lorrha, against Sergeant Lord, of that station, the fact is stated that some time after Maher had made his complaint to the Inspector General of Constabulary he was waited on by Mr. Doolan, J.P., with an offer of the money that Lord had previously refused to pay him; and whether, in view of this presumptive evidence that the amount claimed was due, and that Sergeant Lord was guilty of fraud on the Police Authorities by returning as a voucher a forged receipt for the money that had not been paid, the Government will direct the Attorney General to consider the case with a view to the vindication of justice?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Police Authorities are making inquiry into this matter.

THE POSTMEN'S MEETING AT CLERKENWELL.

MR. CONYBEARE: I beg to ask the Postmaster General if all the postmen who attended the meeting on Clerkenwell Green are to be required to give a written declaration that they will abstain from attending similar meetings, as considerable doubt exists on this subject?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL: The postmen in question will be required to promise that they will not again act in defiance of Official Regulations; but it may, perhaps, be well again to point out to the hon. Member that these relate only to meetings for the discussion of official matters, and that postmen are as free as any other persons to attend public meetings, where questions of public interest are discussed, outside the hours of official duty.

MR. C. GRAHAM: Does the right hon. Gentleman consider that a meeting of postmen to discuss the subject of their wages comes under the Regulations as to discussing official questions?

*MR. RAIKES: Certainly, Sir. I do.

IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

MR. JORDAN (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will give the names of the local managers of the two national schools in Clare to which Michael O'Brien's children were refused admission, namely, Armagh, 8528, National School, and Mullagh, 3928; and the name of the manager of Coore National School to which O'Brien is referred as being conveniently situated?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Commissioners of National Education report that the Rev. J. Cahir, P.P., is the manager of each of the three National Schools mentioned.

*MR. JORDAN: Is it not a fact that since the question was raised five children—two of them children of a policeman,—have been admitted to the Armagh school?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no information on that point.

HOLDERS OF TOWN PARKS IN IRELAND.

MR. M'CARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will introduce into the Land Purchase (Ireland) Bill a provision to give relief to the holders of town parks in Ireland, so as to enable them to have fair rents fixed in respect of their holdings?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As the hon. Member is aware, the Land Purchase (Ireland) Bill does not deal with the question of fair rents, nor can I extend its scope by introducing any such questions into it. Adequate relief seems to be given to the holders of town parks by permitting them to purchase under the Act.

MR. M'CARTAN: Are we to take it the holders of town parks are to expect no further reliefs from the Government?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should think that a relief which enabled them to become owners of the holding at a reduction of 20 per cent. on the rental is not an inconsiderable measure of relief.

CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE.

MR. M'CARTAN: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he will state the maximum number of hours' duty and overtime performed by a telegraph clerk in the Central Telegraph Office for the seven days ending 8th instant; whether clerks on duty for five days from 5 p.m. to 2 a.m. are brought on overtime on the sixth day and also on Sundays; whether clerks, after performing duty from 8 p.m. to 7 a.m., are placed on overtime from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and in some cases to even a later hour; whether these clerks are again on duty at 8 p.m, thus performing 15 hours out of the 24 hours; whether there is less work performed in June than in July or August; and whether he will consider the desirability of taking, without delay, as many probationers from the Telegraph School as will give substantial relief to the overworked clerks?

*MR. RAIKES: In reply to the first question of the hon. Member, I have to state that the maximum number of hours of duty and overtime combined performed by a telegraphist in the Central Telegraph Office during the seven days ended the 8th instant was 81¼. A part of this was, I understand, performed under a private arrangement as substitute for two other telegraphists. The answer to the next three questions is in the affirmative. But, except as regards the Sunday duty—which comes round once in four or five weeks—the performance of the overtime is quite voluntary. Practically, there is not much difference between the amount of work performed in June as compared with the other two months mentioned by the hon. Member. A statement of the comparative number of telegrams in each month will be found in the Appendix to the Reports of the Postmaster General, which are laid before Parliament. I do not myself think it desirable that a telegraphist who has been on duty for 11 hours should resume work at so short an interval as four hours. This was one of the points very fairly urged by the deputation of telegraphists whom I received a short time ago, and I shall be very glad if I can take measures to mitigate what I certainly regard as a hardship.

PRISON WARDERS.

MR. CONYBEARE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the warders in English prisons are required during the hours when they are off duty to appear in uniform outside the prison walls?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Prison Directors that there is an Order requiring the warders in English Convict Prisons when off duty to appear in uniform outside the prison walls. No General Order has been made by the Prison Commissioners on the subject applicable to local prisons. I am not aware that the practice entails any hardship on the men.

MR. CONYBEARE: Is the Rule universally enforced?

MR. MATTHEWS: So far as I am aware it is.

MR. CONYBEARE: I will now ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will consent to receive evidence from warders in Irish prisons showing that the Rule which requires them always to be in uniform even when off duty does entail hardship upon them; and whether, if particular facts are laid before him, he will indemnify any warders who may give such evidence against dismissal or other punishment?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The General Prisons Board report that they entertain no doubt whatever that the present arrangement is not attended with any hardship.

MR. CONYBEARE: I can give the right hon. Gentleman evidence that it does entail hardship. If the facts are laid before him, will he indemnify warders who may give evidence and guarantee them against the brutal ill-treatment of the Prisons Board? I must press this question.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member can lay his facts before the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. CONYBEARE: But I am asking facilities for bringing the facts forward.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must be aware there is nothing to prevent his laying his facts before the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. CONYBEARE: I will repeat my question another day.

MR. P. O'BRIEN: Is it not a fact that the rule was not enforced until a suit of clothes was taken into prison to Mr. W. O'Brien?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know whether that statement of the date is accurate.

Mr. Conybeare

MR. P. O'BRIEN: I was in prison at the time, and I know it to be the fact.

CLERKS IN THE CUSTOMS.

MR. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether an examination for clerkships in the Customs has been held since 1877; and when it is expected the next examination for that Department will be held in Ireland?

*MR. GOSCHEN: Examinations for outport clerkships, the only special examinations for clerkships, that are held for the Customs Service, were held in August, 1880, and in April, 1886. Fresh appointments to such offices are not at present required, and it is not probable that any examination will be held for some time.

ALLEGED POLICE "SHADOWING" AT ARKLOW.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.) (for Mr. J. REDMOND, Wexford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at the fair of Arklow on the 10th instant, two respectable men, named Peter M'Carthy and Henry Birthwistle, were shadowed by Constable Johnson throughout the whole day, and the constable on one occasion shoved against them and endeavoured to provoke an assault; whether John Millen, who was offering mats for sale, was also shadowed, and afterwards arrested; and whether he will state the crime of which these men were suspected?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Peter M'Carthy and John Millen were closely watched by the police at Arklow fair on the occasion mentioned. Both of them had previously been convicted of intimidation, and there was ground for supposing that they were at the fair for the purpose of boycotting. Millen was arrested under the Pedlars Act for hawking without a licence, a charge to which he pleaded guilty. It does not appear that Henry Birthwistle was watched, except for a few minutes when he was in company with M'Carthy.

MR. SEXTON: May I ask what is the rank of the officer in Ireland who is allowed to dictate the degree of shadowing that is to be practised by the police?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should like notice of that question. It will be some superior officer.

MR. GILL: As this is a matter of importance, I should like to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman will state to the House in what manner this method of shadowing operates to prevent boycotting in Ireland, because it is not the fact——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is a matter of argument.

MR. SEXTON: Having given instructions on this matter, has the right hon. Gentleman not informed himself of the rank and responsibility of the officer who dictates this shadowing?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think I am bound to keep in my mind the names of all the officers who give instructions in this matter. Perhaps the hon. Member will put a question on the subject on the Paper.

THE CASE OF JOHN MURPHY.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in reference to the case of John Murphy, an emergency man, charged at last Conna Petty Sessions (County Cork) with "discharging a revolver on the public road," whether the mitigated penalty of £2 10s. and costs imposed on him by Colonel Longbourne, R.M., was reduced still further by the authorities; and, if so, by whom it was reduced, and for what reason; are the authorities aware that this man was convicted of sheep stealing; and will inquiries be made in future before granting licences to carry revolvers or other firearms?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The proceedings in this case were at the suit of the Excise Authorities. I understand that a recommendation for a remission of the penalty has been made to them, but I am not aware of the result. It is not a fact that Murphy was convicted of sheep stealing. He was accused of that offence, but the charge was dismissed.

MARRIAGES IN MALTA.

MR. SUMMERS: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is understood that mixed marriages that have taken place in Malta otherwise than in accordance with the rites of the Roman Catholic Church will, by the intended project of law, be declared valid only in cases where the ceremony has been performed by a clergyman of the Church of England; and whether the intention is to declare all such marriages in the past valid, whether the ceremony has been conducted by Church of England ministers or by ministers of other bodies?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: As regards the validation of past marriages in Malta, it is not intended to make any distinction between marriages celebrated by clergymen of the Church of England and those celebrated by ministers of other religious denominations.

EVICTIONS ON THE OLPHERT ESTATE.

MR. DALTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the presence of the forces of the Crown have been applied for at the evictions of the remaining tenants on the Olphert estate, in the Falcarragh district; and whether he is aware that these tenants, like the tenants on the Swiney and Stewart estates, have been recipients of relief during the past 12 months of seed to crop their lands and of food for their families, and that when rendered homeless they will have no escape from starvation except the workhouse of the Dunfanaghy Union, of which the evicting landlord, Mr. Olphert, is chairman?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Protection has been applied for and granted in respect of the execution of eviction decrees in the case of certain tenants on the Olphert estate, where the Plan of Campaign is in operation. I am informed that these tenants have not been the recipients of relief for their families or of seed to crop their land in the last 12 months.

NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERIES.

MR. FLYNN (for Dr. TANNER): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the *modus vivendi* agreed upon by the French and British Governments will be enforced by the latter in the face of the refusal of the Newfoundland Legislature and people to sanction the arrangement?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The objections of the Newfoundland Legislature seem to be mainly founded on a mistaken notion that the *modus vivendi* tends to impair their rights, or to admit claims on the part of France hitherto not acknowledged. This is not the case, as all rights on both sides are expressly reserved. Some understanding as to the mode of procedure for this reason is absolutely necessary, and Her Majesty's Government must act upon that which has been arranged with the French Government. But Her Majesty's naval officers will endeavour to carry it into effect with all possible regard for the interests of the colony and of the individuals who may be affected. I may add that from recent telegraphic correspondence it would seem that the Joint Committee of both Houses of the Colonial Legislature, while protesting against the French claim to erect any lobster factory, were prepared to admit in practice the main provisions of the *modus vivendi* in deference to the wishes of Her Majesty's Government.

CATHOLIC PRISONERS IN DERRY GAOL.

MR. CONYBEARE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state for each of the months since September last the number of Catholic prisoners confined in Derry Gaol and the terms for which they have been imprisoned; whether any Catholic clergyman has, during that period, been permitted to visit such prisoners; has any Catholic service been conducted in the prison chapel during that period; and whether he still refuses to sanction the appointment by the Bishop of the Diocese to the prison chaplaincy of such clergyman as the Bishop may see fit to nominate?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I received notice of this question too late to obtain information. Perhaps the hon. Member will put the question down for tomorrow.

DERRY GAOL.

MR. HARRISON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether an official from the English Prison Department visited Derry Gaol in the autumn of 1889 with a view to professionally examining into its sanitary condition; if so, whether he is prepared to lay this officials' Report upon the Table of the House?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. Member will put the question down for this day week, I shall be able to say whether or not I can lay the Report on the Table.

SCOTCH CROFTERS.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg to ask whether the Government are prepared to extend to crofters in Scotland the same facilities for becoming owners of their holdings as are proposed to be conferred on the tenants in Ireland under the Purchase of Land and Congested Districts (Ireland) Bill presently before the House?

MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: The Government are not prepared to extend to crofters in Scotland similar provisions to those contained in the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Bill.

OFFENCES UNDER 38 AND 39 VIC., CAP. 86.

MR. CALDWELL: I beg to ask the Attorney General whether each of the sub-sections of Section 7 of the Act 38 and 39 Vic., cap. 86, constitute a separate offence under that section and are cumulative in their application, or whether each of said sub-sections are merely different modes which, singly or together, constitute the offence set forth in said section, liable to a penalty not exceeding £20 or three months' imprisonment?

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): The question is one of abstract law; but, in my opinion, the sub-section constitutes a separate offence, for which a prosecution could be instituted.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS BILL.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the intention of the Treasury to contribute to industrial schools in the same manner and to the same extent as heretofore?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): The passing of the Industrial Schools Bill now before Parliament may involve some re-adjustment of the rate of payment to these schools, but no such re-adjustment will be made without full notice to this House.

OFFENDERS AGAINST THE VACCINATION ACTS.

Mr. CHANNING: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that William Cheney, of Rushden, who was sent to Northampton Gaol on 29th May for seven days in default of a fine for non-compliance with the Vaccination Acts, was compelled to work three hours a day on the treadmill in company with men convicted for thefts, to pick two pounds of oakum daily, and to use a plank bed, and was given as prison food black bread and water and skilly only; whether he is aware that Cheney was suffering from a weak leg owing to rheumatic fever, and that the oakum given him to pick tore his fingers, and was ordered to be removed by the head warder as unfit for punishment work; whether this scale of punishment and diet is permissible under the present law; whether he is aware that, in some similar cases, compensation has been recovered from Governors of gaols when an action for damages has been brought; and whether, if the treatment specified is legal, he will take steps, either by legislation or by representation to Prison Authorities, to mitigate the prison treatment of prisoners under the Vaccination Acts?

Mr. MATTHEWS: W. Cheney was sentenced by the Magistrate to seven days' imprisonment with hard labour in default of payment of a fine and costs; and, under the warrant of commitment, he received the scale of punishment and the diet which are prescribed by the Prison Statutes and Rules. I am, however, advised that the Magistrate exceeded his powers in awarding hard labour under the Vaccination Acts, and I have requested the Treasury Solicitor to consider the matter of Cheney's complaint.

Mr. CHANNING: Will the question of compensation be considered?

Mr. PICTON: Since this is not the first case in which a misunderstanding has arisen about prisoners under the Vaccination Acts, will the right hon. Gentleman take steps to inform Magistrates all over the country that they cannot inflict hard labour in such cases.

Mr. MATTHEWS: I really think that the knowledge that the Vaccination Acts do not authorise hard labour is very general.

LOCAL TAXATION BILL.

Mr. SUMMERS: I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is true, as stated in some newspapers, that the Government have expressed their willingness to appoint a Select Committee next year to inquire into the subject of compensation; and whether the Government will consider the advisability of withdrawing those clauses in the Local Taxation Bill which provides that payments may be made by the County Councils for the extinction of licences, and postpone the consideration of the subject until after the Select Committee has reported?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: A large section of the Government's supporters are desirous that a Committee should carefully examine the licensing question, and notably some proposals of the noble Lord the Member for Paddington. The Government are perfectly willing, if the House should desire it, to appoint a Committee for this purpose, and, as far as they are concerned, they will afford facilities for the inquiry. It is, however, quite impossible for the Government to postpone the consideration of the clauses referred to until the Report of such a Committee is issued. I can only say, in regard to the Bill before the House, that it does not refer to the question of compensation in the sense which I attach to the word. It rather gives power to Local Authorities, if they wish, and not otherwise, to enter into negotiations for the purchase of licences, and it does not —I say it with all respect to those who differ from me—touch the principle of compensation.

MR. MONRO'S RESIGNATION.

Mr. CAUSTON: I beg to ask the Home Secretary if he will state, for the convenience of hon. Members, whether the Police Bill, which has been circulated among Members to-day, is in the same form as when it was submitted to the Chief Commissioner of Police?

Mr. MATTHEWS: I do not think it is right for the hon. Member to inquire into all the different stages through which a Bill has passed; and, therefore, the only reply I can make is to decline to answer his question. I hope hon. Members will not think this is a laughing matter. It may, no doubt, be necessary for me, when the discussion to which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby referred comes on, to make a statement to the House, and to give information, as I am always happy to do, in reply to questions which may be legitimately asked, in regard to certain points and certain matters contained in the draft Bill which was first sent confidentially to the Chief Commissioner for his consideration. I do not think a question on this subject, put in a general form and without notice, ought to be answered.

SIR W. HARCOURT: If the rule which the right hon. Gentleman has just laid down is to be a general rule, I would ask him to consider whether in the letter which he read the other day in this House he did not use that Bill for the purpose of laying the blame on Mr. Monro, the Chief Commissioner, in reference to that Bill. [An hon. MEMBER: Order, order!] Who is calling me to order? The right hon. Gentleman the Minister for Agriculture has not yet been appointed Speaker of this House. [*Cries of* "Order!"]

MR. CHAPLIN: I never opened my mouth.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I would submit to the Home Secretary that an answer to the question which has been put to him is due to Mr. Monro.

MR. MATTHEWS: The answer which I gave to the House I certainly did not imagine to be unfavourable to Mr. Monro, inasmuch as I read entirely Mr. Monro's own letter. I hope I may, without committing an indiscretion, say that the Bill submitted to Mr. Monro was at least as favourable to the police as the Bill now on the Table of the House.

THE INDIAN COUNCILS BILL.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I would ask the First Lord of the Treasury—and if he is unable to answer now I would ask him to consider it with a view to giving an answer to-morrow—whether he can fix a date for taking the Indian Councils Bill, especially as I understand it was one of the matters the Prime Minister referred to the other day as of primary importance?

MR. J. MACLEAN: Would the Government consider the expediency of putting down this Bill as the first Order of the Day on a particular date, instead of relegating it to the fag-end of the evening, when provisions of importance cannot be adequately discussed?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have already said that I am fully aware of the importance of the measure to which the hon. Members refer. I fully realise its very great importance, but at the present moment it is impossible for me to name a date. I will include this subject in the statement I shall have to make to-morrow.

PUBLIC WORKS LOANS IN IRELAND.

MR. SUMMERS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Board of Works in Ireland, when applied to for a loan under the Public Works Loans (Tramways) (Ireland) Act by the Mitchelstown and Fermoy Railway Company, on 24th August, 1889, replied, under date of 27th August, 1889, asking for the nature of the security proposed; and whether, after having been informed of the nature of the said security, they wrote under date 10th September, 1889, saying they were precluded by a Treasury Minute from making such advances?

MR. JACKSON: I am informed that the reply of the Board of Works, dated 14th September, stated that "the Treasury have decided to make no further loans on security of shares."

MR. CLANCY: Are we distinctly to understand that up to the present date no grant has been sanctioned for any railway scheme in Donegal under the Light Railways Act of last year?

MR. JACKSON: If the hon. Member's question means whether any formal assent of the Treasury has been given, my answer is in the negative.

MR. CLANCY: Are the West Donegal Railway Company justified in announcing to the public that on the 26th of June next, at a special meeting of the Company, the confirmation will be proposed of an agreement between them and the Treasury for the construction of a light railway from Donegal to Killybeg?

MR. JACKSON: There is nothing inconsistent in that announcement with what I have stated. I think the railway company are taking a very sanguine view in assuming that the negotiations will be successful.

MR. CLANCY: Is this the Barton—Price scheme?

MR. JACKSON: I think my answer is in the affirmative.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can now say whether the Government intend to ask the House to pass the Land Purchase Bill this year; and what proposal, if any, they will make in regard to the business of the House?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have every reason to believe that I shall be in a position to-morrow to make a statement to the House relative to the present condition of public business, and to give notice of proposals for the further facilitation of that business. In that statement will be included the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Bill, and therefore I must ask the hon. Gentleman to defer his question till to-morrow.

SIR W. HARCOURT: What day will be fixed for the discussion of the question of the condition of the Metropolitan Police? The right hon. Gentleman promised to fix a day, and I submit that that day cannot be too early. Further, I would ask whether the correspondence will be laid upon the Table at once with reference to the resignation of Mr. Monro? Of course, the correspondence read by the Home Secretary will be laid, but I refer to further correspondence.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It would be more convenient that I should answer the question to-morrow in connection with the other statement that I may have to make.

MR. CAINE: I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whateer it is intended to take the Local Taxation Bill from day to day throughout this week?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I hope so, Sir.

MR. BUCHANAN: May I ask when the Government Bill relating to police superannuation in Scotland will be introduced, and whether it will be in the hands of hon. Members before the clause in the Local Taxation Bill comes on for consideration?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It is in course of preparation, but I am not able to state the exact day on which it will be introduced.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LOCAL TAXATION (CUSTOMS AND EXCISE) DUTIES BILL.—(No. 244.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

*(5.56.) THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): With reference to the question which just now was asked by the hon. Member for Edinburgh, I have to say that if it should meet with the assent of the House, and not otherwise, the Government think there would be an advantage, after we have finished Clause 1, in postponing Clauses 2, 3, and 4. Clause 2 deals with Scotland; Clause 3 with Ireland; and Clause 4 with superannuation. Then Clause 5 deals with the extinction of licences in England. It seems to me, therefore, that it will be an advantage if we proceed to further consider the matter as it has been set out in Clause 5. I understand it is desired that the Bill for the superannuation of the police in Scotland should be in the hands of Members before Clause 2 is discussed. As I have already said, the proposed arrangement will only be made with the concurrence of the House generally.

(5.57.) SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): If the right hon. Gentleman got up to propose the postponement of all the clauses it would be a very reasonable proposal, especially after the announcement we have heard about the Committee, because, whatever the First Lord of the Treasury may say, we know, and everybody knows, that no Gentleman on those Benches ever argued this Bill except upon the principle of compensation. To say, therefore, that compensation has nothing to do with the Bill is absurd. Therefore, if the whole subject of compensation is one which demands a Committee, the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman ought to have been to postpone this clause and Clause 5. If, instead of that, the Government intend to force on this Bill, they ought to take it in its regular course.

*(5.58.) THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): Under these circumstances, we shall adopt the recommendation of the right hon. Gentleman and take the Bill in its regular course.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): If I understand the recommendation of my right hon. Friend near me, it is not that we should proceed with the Bill as it stands, but that, in consequence of the intimation given by Her Majesty's Government as to inquiring into compensation at a future date, we should postpone the legislation as to compensation until we have inquired. That is the recommendation we should be inclined to make.

*(5.59.) MR. W. H. SMITH: I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman and his friends as to whether there is not a marked difference between a general inquiry into the licensing question, including the question of compensation, and the proposals in this Bill. If nothing is to be done in the way of diminishing the temptation to intemperance until we have inquired into this great licensing question and the House has come to an agreement upon it, then I think the right hon. Gentleman and his friends will assume a great responsibility in postponing for so long a period a reform in which we desire to make some advance.

(6.0.) MR. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness): I move to report Progress. The whole of the circumstances surrounding this Bill appear to be entirely changed. We now have information that the Government intend to bring forward proposals——

*(6.0.) MR. W. H. SMITH: What I stated was in answer to a question. Intimation had come from various quarters of the House that it was desirable that an inquiry should take place, and I said that the Government would be willing if the House wished it. We do not want it.

(6.1.) MR. CAINE: I am aware of the words of the right hon. Gentleman, but there is absolutely no difference between a Motion brought forward by the Front Bench in favour of a Select Committee to inquire into any particular question and such a Motion brought forward by one of their supporters to whom the Government gives facilities. We have a right to know a good deal more than the right hon. Gentleman has told us so far. The First Lord of the Treasury states that he is willing to give facilities for the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the whole question, and yet with that before us, and the probability of such a Committee being appointed next Session, the Government propose to go on with the Bill dealing with what a large number of hon. Members and a large number of the general public believe to lie at the basis of any reform of the Licensing Laws. As my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) has said, it is ridiculous to tell us that compensation is not discussed under this Bill. We are not only now told that this Select Committee is to be appointed, but we are also told that the Government wish to suspend certain clauses of the Bill. Do they think that we are going to tamely submit to Clause 1 being passed by the Committee while the other clauses are hung up in the meantime?

*MR. RITCHIE: We are not going to do that. It is merely with a view to facilitate business.

MR. CAINE: I hope some detailed information will be given to us as to what the intentions of the Government really are. Who is to bring forward this Motion for a Select Committee? When are the Government to give facilities for its discussion—to-day, to-morrow, or when? because if this House appoints this Committee——

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I said next Session, and I do not know who may bring it forward seven months hence.

MR. CAINE: I do not wish to prolong the Debate. I shall certainly divide the House on my Motion unless some satisfactory explanation is given.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Caine.*)

(6.3.) SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I rise to support the Motion of my hon. Friend the

Member for Barrow (Mr. Caine.) It must be evident to the Committee that we stand in a totally different position to-day from what we were in before. A most remarkable statement has been made. The first intimation given of this new policy was made at a meeting of Dissentient Liberals, presided over by the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (The Marquess of Hartington). The noble Marquess stated that he "understood from the Government that they were willing next year to appoint a Select Committee to consider the whole of the compensation question." I hope that the noble Marquess will get up and state to the Committee how he got this information from the Government. Why have not the Government been straightforward and come to the House with this information? The position is a most astounding one for the Government to be placed in. Here is a matter that is exciting more interest in the political world than has any matter in the past three years at least, and all we are told is that the Government themselves want more information. Why do they grant a Committee? No one has asked for one. We have our opinion: we do not want a Committee. Apparently this Bill is to proceed, although the Government say that more information is desired by somebody. There never was such a case of pronouncing sentence first and having the trial afterwards. It appears to me to be positively indecent. In my Parliamentary experience I have never known such an outrage, and I hope that the Committee will show its regard for honour and good sense by carrying the Motion.

(6.6.) THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON (Lancashire, N.E., Rossendale): I rise to say at once that I do not admit the accuracy of the report of the observations I made at the meeting the other day.

SIR W. LAWSON: I took the words *verbatim* from the *Times*.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: My hon. Friend will see that no report has appeared in any paper which purported to be a *verbatim* report. I do not think it likely that I made use of the words that I was informed by the Government that it was intended to appoint a Select Committee. When my hon. Friend asks what is the source of my information, I cannot at this moment undertake to tell him with any accuracy. The fact is that I have heard for a long time discussion on the subject of the appointment of such a Committee—in fact, ever since the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) introduced his Bill—I have heard in all quarters of the House that it was a question of referring the proposals of the noble Lord to a Committee for consideration. Of course, it is quite possible that I might have had discussion with members of the Government, and I certainly never understood that they were adverse to the proposal of a Committee. But I had no authority from the Government at that time to state that they had decided to appoint such a Committee. I do not think, therefore, that the expression was one that I am likely to have used.

*(6.8.) MR. RITCHIE: There is no doubt whatever that the proposition with reference to a Committee emanated from the noble Lord the Member for Paddington. It has been on more than one occasion mentioned as being desirable. The position of the Government in the matter is this—that if there is a desire to investigate the question of compensation, and how it ought to be applied, they do not see that it would be their duty to negative such a proposal. With reference to what the hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth said as to the effect that such an announcement has on the position of the Government with regard to this Bill, I would admit that he had some ground for his remark if the Government had alleged that in any real sense their proposals were a settlement of the licensing question. As a matter of fact, the Government have again and again said that they regard the ultimate settlement of this question as only possible upon the lines of handing over the Licensing Authority to County Councils. It will be obvious that if such a proposal were made the whole question involved by compensation would have to be considered. But, so far as this Bill is concerned, the Government have always said that, pending the settlement of the question, they desire that some steps should be taken with the view of meeting the wishes of the Temperance Party by diminishing the opportunities for obtaining drink. We have denied that

compensation, as it is understood, is within the four corners of this Bill, or that anything in this Bill will fetter the action of Parliament, or of a Committee, when the whole question comes to be considered.

(6.10.) SIR W. HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman has only repeated what he has said over and over again in the course of the discussion on this Bill, but that is not the question. We want to know how we stand with reference to this Committee. The First Lord of the Treasury and the noble Marquess have assumed an air of complete innocence with regard to the Committee, but that is not the way it was presented to mankind two days ago. The fact is that the Government were in a great difficulty. They wanted a majority. The Liberal Unionists were in a difficulty as to how they were going to vote, and the noble Marquesss went down to the meeting to induce a number of Members of Parliament and the country to be satisfied with this Bill by assuring them that the Government were going to appoint a Committee. All the Government newspapers said :—"Let us pass this Bill, because we are going to have a Committee on compensation, which will settle the whole thing." It was felt that as the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale had pledged the Government to a Committee, all the Liberal Unionists might safely vote with the Government on the Bill. The First Lord of the Treasury now gets up, and, with an air of supreme innocence, says that it is possible that seven months hence somebody may propose a Committee, and that is a substitute for the assurance of the noble Marquess. You cannot separate the noble Marquess and the Leader of the House, for they are carrying on together this business of purchasing public houses. The signature of the one is the signature of the other, and when the name of one is seen at the back of a Bill you know perfectly well that the other will be obliged to take it up. This Committee on compensation has been used as an argument for supporting the Bill. Either the Government, by themselves or their agents, are going to propose this Committee on compensation, or they are not. If they are going to do so it is a valid argument to report Progress; if they are not, then all the pretences that have been held forth to Members of the House on the matter are a mere delusion. We wish to know whether this Committee is a real thing or a sham.

*(6.14.) MR. W. H. SMITH: The right hon. Gentleman seems to know more about this Committee than the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale, or than I do myself. He says that it is a device by which votes are to be got for this Bill. I entirely deny anything of the kind, and surely the word of the noble Lord is sufficient when he says that he was not speaking for the Government. The noble Lord was aware of the fact—and stated how he became aware of the fact—that many hon. Gentlemen in this House, especially the noble Lord the Member for Paddington, were desirous that a Committee should be appointed to consider the whole question of licensing. Now, that matter is one which is entirely independent of the Bill which is now before the House. No recommendation has been, or will be, made to hon. Gentlemen to vote for this Bill in consequence of that Committee. We are not responsible, nor at any time have we indicated an intention to make a proposal for such a Committee. All that we have said is that, so far as we are concerned, we believe that the examination of the question would be advantageous; we do not bind ourselves to a Committee, or to any reference to a Committee. We do not ask the House to vote for this Bill with reference to any recommendation in any way for a possible Committee, but we ask the House to dispose of the business of this Session before it enters into the consideration of what the business of next Session will be.

(6.17.) MR. ROWNTREE (Scarborough): The matter gets more perplexing the further we proceed. The Committee have a right to ask whether the announcement made at the meeting the other night was not made with some view of influencing votes.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I said distinctly not. [Hon. MEMBERS: How do you know.]

MR. ROWNTREE: I think the interposition of the right hon. Gentleman is very interesting; but what I ask is whether, at a meeting which took place on Friday, this statement was not made with a view of influencing votes one way or the other, in view of the Division which was to take place the same night. Secondly, I have to ask whether the report which was published, and which has been quoted, was not an official report issued by the Whips of the Party. But, quite apart from these questions, I wish to express the belief that it will be generally thought that temperance reformers in the country will be put in a very unfair position by the proceedings which have taken place if these clauses which they strongly object to are now going to be forced into law. It has been very properly stated by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board that the proposals of the Government are no settlement of the temperance question. Yes, but there is something far more important than that. These proposals are, and have been, stated definitely by Ministers of the Crown to be a settlement of the principle of compensation. [*Cries of* "No, no."] Principal supporters of Her Majesty's Ministry have asserted that over and over again. The *Times* has asserted it, and Ministers have asserted it. What did the President of the Board of Trade say at Bristol? The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "Brewers and publicans may surely not feel dissatisfied with the important recognition of the principle of compensation for licences taken away without any default of the holder."

And that was said just on the eve of a bye election, just as the statement was made by the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale on the eve of an important Division. Furthermore, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland has spoken of this Bill as involving the question of compensation, and then in the speeches the President of the Local Government Board has made in the House he has twice quoted in support of the Bill Gentlemen who specially stated that they supported the measure because it involves the question of compensation. I maintain that the temperance reformers will be put in a most unfair position if the Government now attempt to assume that the Bill does not involve the question of compensation; indeed, such an announcement will only increase the heat and feeling of indignation with which the Bill is regarded in the country.

*(6.21.) THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): The hon. Gentleman shifted his language as he went along. In the first place, he said the Government stated that the Bill settled the question of compensation, and afterwards he said they held that the question of compensation was involved in the proposals. I will tell the Committee precisely how I regard the matter. We have not considered our proposal as settling the question of compensation, but right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and a large party out of doors, have read into this Bill that which is not there, and they have argued the whole time upon a principle which we have not admitted to be in our Bill at all. I have endeavoured to show, in replying to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition the other day, that they themselves are committed to the principle of vested rights and a legislative title. But I quoted the opinions of the right hon. Gentlemen opposite with regard to compensation. We replied to their various arguments but the particular proposal which we make is entirely apart from the principle of compensation. We are simply dealing with the extinction of licences as carried out in the same manner as that in which Municipal Corporations deal with the extinction of licences where they have purchased licensed houses for street improvements or other purposes. I am sorry to have got involved in any arguments of this nature, but this is the main point of misrepresentation. It is said that we recognise a vested interest for the first time by this Bill. But if it exists, we see that it has received recognition from Municipal Corporations, who, in the making of street improvements, have not waited until the end of the year, when the licence expired, and then told the Magistrates they were not going to require a licence in future, but have spent public money in acquiring the licence. They have spent the rates in buying these rights, because they knew that the community and the law would not have allowed them to do otherwise. Hon. Members must have forgot that this power granted to Municipal Corporations to buy up public houses must have received legislative sanction, because the provi-

sions under which they bought must have been included in the improvement schemes. We, therefore, say that this Bill does not settle the question of compensation; it acts upon the principle of the purchase of public houses, but lies outside the general question of licensing. There is a vast multitude of questions connected with licensing which lie outside this Bill, and we thought that in the various parts of the House there was a desire that so difficult a question should be submitted to inquiry. We do not want any further information for the purposes of this Bill, and, therefore, there is no necessity to postpone the consideration of this Bill to another Session. But if it is the desire generally of the House we feel that much light might be thrown on the various phases of a subject which is so extremely complicated. I repeat, however, that this Bill may and ought to proceed, and, if I may say so without offence to any hon. Members, will proceed quite apart from any question of this Committee.

(6.28.) MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): Right hon. Gentlemen opposite have been disposed to deny that this Bill embodies the principle of compensation, and to complain of us on this side of the House, who have contended that it does. Now, I have contended and argue still that in saying that it adopts the principle of compensation we are adopting the mildest term by which it is possible to describe this payment of public money. Possibly the right hon. Gentlemen the First Lord of the Treasury, who disclaims compensation, agrees with me that "the Public House Endowment Bill" is the true name that ought to be attached to the Bill, constitutes its true title, and alone describes its effects. When we are compelled to use the word compensation for Parliamentary and public purposes we mean payment out of taxation to be given to the owners of houses which have received annual licences as a condition of the non-renewal of those licences. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has to-night argued that, setting aside the case of criminal misconduct, it would be monstrous to take away any licence without a guarantee for payment in return for it. That is what we mean by compensation. This is a Bill for compensation in that sense. We are not alone in this opinion, for a colleague of the right hon. Gentleman thinks with us. Sir M. Hicks Beach has stated, in addressing his constituents, "The brewer and the publican may surely not feel dissatisfied." By-the-by, on another point that right hon. Gentleman entirely differs as to the object of this Bill from the other occupants of the Government Bench. They said that the object of this Bill was not at all to satisfy the brewer and the publican, but that the object was to satisfy the Temperance Party. Of course we are bound to believe it. But then it is a very awkward circumstance for us, credulous and unsophisticated as we are, that a Cabinet Minister goes to his constituents and blows this out of the water, and says—

> "The brewer and the publican may surely not feel dissatisfied at the important recognition of the principle of compensation for licences taken away without any default on the part of the holder."

After that the colleagues of the right hon. Gentleman, fortunately for them in his momentary absence, get up and deny there is any compensation in this Bill. I will not enter into that question, as I wish to keep as strictly as I can to the Motion of my hon. Friend. He moves that we should report Progress, because we are not in condition to proceed with the discussion of enactments bearing on the question of withdrawal of licences, not for compensation, but only for payment of public money. That is his contention, and that is the contention I wish to support. The principal ground on which my hon. Friend bases his contention is that we have been told that a Committee is going to be appointed. I must frankly own the view which I, for one, cannot help taking, and which I believe is taken by not far short of 300 Members of this House, that the proposal of a Committee we look upon as an expedient simply and solely for relieving the Government from a difficulty. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury sees no connection whatever between the Committee and relieving the Government from a difficulty. Well, Sir, I place the most implicit belief on everything said by the right hon. Gentleman, even when that belief compels me to raise questions which I would rather not raise as to the acuteness of the intelligence and perception of the right hon. Gentleman. I wonder whether the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale shares what I will venture to call the blindness of the First Lord of the Treasury, and sees no connection between the suggestion of a Committee so benevolently made and the relief of the Government from a difficulty. However, that is not the main question, what the Government see or do not see, or what we see or do not see. We are at present strongly persuaded of the truth of this idea I have mentioned, and if we are wrong, then I hope you will remove it from our minds, that we may forget it. We are strongly persuaded of the truth of the view I have expressed, but, apart from that, the ground of the Motion now made is clear and strong. A question is raised about a Committee. At one time it appears to be a solid form before us, a real substantial thing; at other times it assumes a cloudy shape, and is in danger of vanishing into the thinnest air. But whatever it be, we have a right to know. Is there to be a committee or is there not? The right hon. Gentleman has said three things. He has disclaimed the intention of the Government to have a Committee, but he sailed very near the wind. He said that in important quarters of the House there was a great desire for a Committee. As I am acquainted with the sentiments of hon. Members in some degree from representations made to me, I can only say that those with whom I have the honour to act, and those who follow the lead of the hon. Member for Cork, do not entertain the desire stated by the right hon. Gentleman; but that, I suppose, is because they are not at all important quarters of the House. It is from my noble Friend the Member for Rossendale, backed by the apparently single voice of the noble Lord the Member for Paddington. My noble Friend is most anxious for a Committee, and the Government say that they pay deference to those important quarters of the House, and that if it is pressed for, they will support or will not oppose a Committee.

*MR. RITCHIE: If it is the general desire of the House.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I do not know what means of ascertaining the desire of the House the right hon. Gentleman has in contemplation. The First Lord of the Treasury added two other things. He said they would give facilities for discussing it—that is a pretty clear indication of the intentions of the Government—and he said, "We think the inquiry would be advantageous." That is going uncommonly near the point, and leaves very little standing ground indeed for those who say the Government do not ask for the appointment of this Committee. No one, I think, can say that this Bill will not completely alter the position of the Committee if it is to be appointed. Is there any man who will rise on the other side of the House, and say that the Committee sitting after this Bill has passed would be in exactly the same position as if it sat before this Bill passed? If there is to be a Committee, that Committee ought to come to the question with a free hand. Appoint your Committee at once if you like. Why not; if the question is of this vital consequence, it is much better that we should appoint a Committee than waste the time of the Government in this most unnecessary, most unhappy, most gratuitous contention sprung upon us, after we had passed the middle of the Session, without notice in the Queen's Speech, and totally contrary to our expectations. It is one thing for a Committee to approach this question now, when no one can quote precedent or authority for saying that Parliament has given countenance to the doctrine denying the principle that licences can be taken away without compensation. You are now calling upon us to reverse that principle, and provide that no licences shall fail to be renewed apart from the default of the holder, except by payment out of the public money provided under the authority of Parliament. The two questions are vitally, absolutely, and entirely different. If you pass this Bill and then bring the Committee to consider it, they approach it with tied hands. In point of fact the principle will have been laid down which, in our opinion, decides the whole matter. But at any rate, whether that be right or wrong, can you deny that the position and the conditions under which the Committee will approach the question, must, even according to your point of view, be very materially affected by the passing of this Bill? If there is going to be an inquiry, we have a right to ask that the conditions of that inquiry shall be maintained identically as they now are, and that the freedom of the Committee shall be preserved to it, and preserved intact. On that ground we say it is contrary to sense, to prudence, to public interest, and to every principle involved in the case that we should proceed with those portions of the Bill which relate to licences while the question of the Committee is hanging over our heads undecided.

(6.40.) SIR W. LAWSON: I think we ought to have some explanation from the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale, who made this statement, as to why it was made and with what object. The proceedings of the Committee, we are told, can have no effect upon anything; but I must agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian that our hands will be tied if this clause is passed. We shall become, in fact, a "tied" House. It is, I think, rather humiliating to confess surprise at anything in this House; but I was a little surprised by the Chancellor of the Exchequer getting up and trying to persuade us there is no compensation in the Bill. Now I will read a short sentence from a speech of his own, and the Committee will then understand whether this Bill embodies the principle of compensation or not. In his Budget speech, when the policy was first introduced to the House upon which this Bill is founded, the right hon. Gentleman used these words—

> "If the brewers contend that it is out of their pockets and not out of the pockets of consumers this extra 6d. is paid, I respectfully point out to them that in our proposals we include the suggestion of a sum equal, indeed, to their contribution for diminishing the number of existing licences, a process in which I think they, as brewers, will find much compensation and consolation."

I do not know why the right hon. Gentleman shakes his head. I read that in a pamphlet which purported to be a a report of the right hon. Gentleman's speech on the Budget, and the pamphlet was sent me, I presume, by his direction; he said he was going to provide a process by which he would give brewers much compensation and consolation. It is, then, I submit too late to tell the Committee there is no compensation in the Bill. No, Sir; the Committee knows how these things are managed, all this talk about purchasing houses for the public improvement. When a Tory is addressing a respectable meeting in which the Temperance Party is represented, he says this is merely giving to Local Authorities tho power to improve their locality by purchasing unnecessary licences; but when he attends a really good Tory meeting of publicans and Primrose dames then he says it is "compensation." But the man who tries to ride two horses frequently comes to grief, and the right hon. Gentleman, in trying to ride the temperance horse and the publican horse, will find he cannot make smooth progress and retain his seat for long.

*(6.45.) MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.): As a Scotch Member, I enter my protest against the statement made to us. It is idle to say we are prepared to discuss this question now in the same condition in which we were before the important announcement was made to us in reference to the appointment of this Committee. We in Scotland have given evidence as to our feeling in respect to the compensation clauses of this Bill, we stand in a different position to others. The clauses referring to Scotland have still to come before the Committee, and we ought to be informed before we enter upon them what our position is. I desire also to enter my protest against the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in regard to the action of Licensing Authorities in Scotland, on the question of compensation. The right hon. Gentleman said that Corporations gave compensation when they took public houses for public improvements, but he knows perfectly well that Licensing Authorities have no power whatever in regard to city improvements. Houses are taken under the Lands Clauses Act, and there is no reference to the Magistrates, who have no right to interfere, and the Licensing Authorities consequently have nothing whatever to do with compensation in in such cases when public houses are taken. The right hon. Gentleman can not deny that the number of "on" licenses in Scotland have been largely reduced at the discretion of the Magistrates without any compensation whatever, and times without number the Magistrates have declared that they cannot recognise any private transactions with regard to

licences, and have claimed the right to refuse the renewal of any licence according to their discretion and their view of the altered circumstances in connection with the application. Licences may thus be refused in sufficient numbers without any compensation whatever, and, therefore, we have a right, if there is to be a Committee appointed, to submit the evidence from Scotland, and this, I am convinced, will clearly demonstrate there is no cause for compensation and for these clauses, so objectionable to the whole of the Liberal Scotch Members.

(6.47.) Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): The right hon. Gentleman, before any question was put from the Chair, made his statement as to a Committee and the postponement of Clauses 2, 3, and 4. Let me remind the Committee of what was done upon the Budget Bill. When we came to consider it the Government made a similar proposal, and we assented to it. When the Second Reading of this Bill came on we asked that the taxation clauses of the Budget Bill should be postponed, but the Government refused, on the ground that they were necessary and essential. Yet, now they declare their willingness to postpone these Clauses 2, 3, and 4 indefinitely. This is an additional reason why we should know exactly what the Government mean, and where they stand. The First Lord says really it does not matter whether this Committee is appointed or not, and the noble Lord, in his innocent way, said he did not speak at Devonshire House on any sufficient information, he simply threw out the suggestion. Now, let me point out that whenever the Government are in a difficulty they appoint a Committee. When the difficulty arose as to the financial relations between England and Ireland, they said, "We will give you a Committee." Again, when the point arose as to the bonding of spirits, and the favour shown to German spirits, then a Committee was promised. Then, for the third time, when the Liberal Unionists are in a difficulty the noble Lord is instructed to go down to Devonshire House and make a statement on behalf of the other "tied" house, the Carlton Club. It is well understood that Devonshire House is a "tied" house in this matter.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not see the relevancy of these observations to the Motion before the Committee.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Doubtless, Sir, I was misled by speakers who have preceded me, and I thought I was only bettering their instruction. When the hon. Baronet was allowed to ask a question of the noble Lord I did humbly predicate in my mind that a little more probing would not be more disorderly than the catechism which was allowed. The noble Lord says he had no authority for his suggestion beyond his knowledge that a general feeling prevailed in favour of the appointment of such a Committee. Now, I take leave to say it is absolutely essential, from the point of view of Irish Members, to know exactly where the Government stand. The first thing we noticed when the question of postponement arose was that the Irish Secretary departed from the House when I was about to ask him, if I could have found the opportunity, what was the object of the postponement of the Irish clauses. We have not yet spoken in Committee upon this Bill at all.

The CHAIRMAN: That is not relevant to the question before the Committee now. There is a Motion to report Progress, on the ground that steps are going to be taken hereafter which will greatly affect further discussion.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Yes, Sir; and I am endeavouring humbly to add a further argument to reinforce the strength of the position in favour of reporting Progress. My anxiety is to know upon what ground the Government wish to postpone the Irish clauses. Here I am glad to see the apparition of the Chief Secretary. My anxiety is germane to the question before us. The Government have expressed their willingness to postpone Clauses 2, 3, and 4. Irish Members have not taken part in the discussions on this Bill, and I now intervene, for the first time on the part of Irish Members, to ask why it is the Government desire to, or are willing to, postpone the Irish clauses. The President of the Local Government Board made a distinct offer to postpone Clauses 2, 3, and 4, which offer, after the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, the First Lord withdrew. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby spoke for one important section of Members on this side; but we want to know what is the possible connection between Irish Customs and Excise and the business of police superannuation? We have police superannuation, and we are puzzled, and suspicious that the Government have something in their minds as to the distribution of the Irish Excise Duty. It may be there is a valid solid reason for postponing the Irish clauses, but let us know that reason. We have what the Chief Secretary calls "reasonable suspicion," but we have no proof, no knowledge of the Government position; and so I think we are justified in supporting the Motion to report Progress.

(6.59.) MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): We ought to have some more clear understanding with respect to the appointment of this Committee. I do not see the slightest use of discussing with the Government whether compensation is in the Bill or not, we might as well discuss with reasonable human beings whether the sun shines in the heavens or not. With regard to this Committee, which is the basis of this demand to report progress, we have no clear understanding. The First Lord of the Treasury gets up and waives the matter away, saying there was some vague idea that somebody wanted a Committee, that he really did not know quite who, and that he had had no sort of communication with the noble Lord. But what did the noble Lord (Lord Hartington) say? He said it was quite possible he had discussed the matter with the First Lord of the Treasury, and we are asked to believe in a vague way that the proposal emanates from the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill). It is unfortunate that the noble Lord the Member for Paddington, because he happens to be absent from this House, should have all the responsibility thrown upon him. I take leave to believe that the noble Lord the Member for Paddington is not responsible for this. It is absurd to suppose that the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale when he called together his Party at their official meeting place, to consult with them as to a matter on which the immediate supporters of the Government were deserting them, and to bring the pressure of the Liberal Unionists to bear upon the unfortunate Tories who were for a moment getting up their courage and trying to rebel—it is a little too strong for us to be told that the noble Lord, a cautious man, as we are always told, should actually make this proposal because he had heard a vague remark that possibly the noble Lord the Member for Paddington wanted a Committee. I see the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale is not here. I see the First Lord of the Treasury is not here. Where are they now? What monstrosity are they confederating together? What proposal is being made by the noble Lord to the First Lord of the Treasury? Is it something else that the noble Lord the Member for Paddington wants, and the First Lord of the Treasury is to be induced to agree to? We are told by the First Lord of the Treasury that the Government would consent to the Committee, and give a date for it if the House desired it. Now, "the House" is a very vague term. What does it mean? Is it to be a universal assent? Is it to be the assent of 300 Members on this side, or of the Liberal Unionists and Conservatives themselves? My impression is that the Conservatives may assent to it, but they will not desire it. They would have been delighted if this question had not been raised. They have to thank the Chancellor of the Exchequer for it, and, from all we understand, they are not thanking him very ardently for what he has done. Is it the Liberal Unionists who are desirous of having the Committee appointed? Are we to understand that the proposal is to be forced upon the House, with, very possibly, the Closure enforced, after which we will have to vote yea or nay? The reason why my hon. Friend the Member for Barrow moved this was that he, like many of us, is anxious to save the time of the House. ["Oh!"] Yes; what the Government have been doing is this: they have been digging a pit for themselves; they are at the bottom of that pit, and we have been throwing a rope to them, and trying to get them out of it. They turn and sneer upon us, but I will give the Government a piece of advice. Withdraw this Bill, and appoint a Committee. Do not force any general scheme at this time of the Session. Possibly, when you move the Committee, I may oppose it altogether. I do not pledge myself to support anything brought in by Her Majesty's present advisers. Now you have got a Committee proposed, put aside this Bill, and bring it forward again after the Committee has sat, next Session. What you are doing at present is really putting the cart before the horse. You want to pass a Bill first, and then ask a Committee to discuss its principles. If you do not want to waste the time of the country, appoint your Committee, let it Report, and then bring in your Bill next year.

(7.7.) MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): Before we go to a Division, I wish to make one observation. I hope that, whether or not it is the intention to withdraw all three clauses, we shall not adhere to Clause 2. We are not in a position to discuss Clause 2 in the absence of the clauses relating to compensation.

(7.8.) MR. JACOB BRIGHT (Manchester, S.W.): The Committee is in an extraordinary position. So far as I understand, the great majority of this Committee are in favour of inquiry first and legislation afterwards. I say the great majority, because I understand the followers of the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale are in favour of a Committee. But the Government is in a distinct minority on this question, and if the House voted according to the opinions which have been expressed, it is quite clear that we should relieve the Government of a great difficulty.

(7.10.) MR. T. M. HEALY: If the right hon. Gentleman wishes to avoid a second Motion to report Progress, he will answer the question which I put, as to why the Irish Clause of this Bill is postponed.

*(7.9.) MR. RITCHIE: There may be some discussion in connection with the Scotch Clause, and also in connection with the English Superannuation Clause, and it was felt better, in the interests of business, that we should complete the discussion on the application of the money to the acquisition of licences, by going on to Clause 5, which provides the machinery for England. In that way we would complete the discussion. There is no other reason for postponing the Irish Clause.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Are we to understand that if the Irish Members desire to postpone Clause 3, that course will be agreed to?

*MR. RITCHIE: I say at once, if that were generally wished by the hon. Members for whom the hon. and learned Gentleman speaks, the Government would be prepared to accept that course.

(7.11.) MR. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): As there is hardly a Member of the House who will not feel his position altered by the statement that is to be made to-morrow by the Leader of the House, I desire to support the Motion to report Progress. We want an opportunity to resent the insinuation made by the right hon. Gentleman, that we are less desirous to diminish the temptations to drunkenness than are the hon. Gentlemen who follow him. If the Government will suspend this Bill, and re-consider their position, and then put before us proposals really directed to the diminution of the temptations to drunkenness, I have no hesitation in saying they will be amply supported on this side of the House. If the Government insist on defeating this Motion of the hon. Member for Barrow, I trust, at any rate, they will consent to postpone not only Clauses 2, 3, and 4, but 5, 6, and 7; and then we shall come to the clause which provides for the renewal of licences. That clause, to my mind, is the only clause in the Bill which tends to diminish the temptations to drunkenness, and that clause I promise the Government, will have, on this side of the House, thorough and fair consideration.

(7.14.) MR. BOLITHO (Cornwall, St. Ives): I desire to say one word, and one word only. I am not ashamed to say that, hitherto, I have not given a vote as regards this measure; nor am I ashamed to say, also, that I could not find it in my conscience to support the principles of this Bill. Without at all going into the question of the Amendment put on the Paper by the hon. Member for Huddersfield, I may say that I have an Amendment on the Paper in very similar terms. Feeling, as I do, not only that a very large number of Members on this side of the House, but also on the other, desire to see this question settled on what I call a proper fair and legitimate basis, I have no alternative but to support the Motion of the hon. Member for Barrow.

(7.16.) CAPTAIN VERNEY (Bucks, N.): Before the Committee proceeds to a Division, I wish to draw the attention of the Committee to the fact that nobody, either on the Front Bench or any of the Benches opposite, has answered the challenge of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, that the Committee would not be in the same position, in entering upon this question, if the Bill is passed. That is the distinct challenge that has been thrown down, and nobody has had the pluck or manliness to take it up, because nobody can take it up. Nobody can assert that the Committee would be in the same position if the Bill is passed. I hope hon. Gentlemen who are going to vote will bear in mind that the challenge has been fairly thrown down, and that no one has had the courage to take it up.

(7.17.) MR. H. S. WRIGHT (Nottingham, S.): I rise to reply to the challenge of the hon. Member (Captain Verney), who has just said that no one on this side of the House has disputed the assertion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, that the position of the compensation question will be changed by the passing of this Bill. I venture to deny that it will be practically altered, for the following reason: namely, that the Bill does not create any new vested interest, but simply affirms an unalterable principle of justice in regard to this matter. That principle has been acted on in the past, and was very forcibly laid down by the right hon. Gentleman himself 10 years ago; and I venture to hope that the right hon. Gentleman will adhere to that principle whenever the question of compensation, in some form or other, comes before the House and the country in some future comprehensive licensing measure, or in case it should now be referred to a Select Committee.

MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg): I think we ought not to go on with this measure until there has been an inquiry. There is certainly something sufficiently interesting to justify inquiry by the Committee. I, for one, being of an inquiring turn of mind, am very anxious to have some sort of inquiry before we go on with the Compensation Clauses of the Bill. Therefore, on behalf of a very large number of Members of this House who wish to have all the facts put before them, I suggest that there should first be a Committee to obtain information upon which we might act afterwards. It would seem that one of the objects of our existence is to maintain in office Her Majesty's Government, and they are now in such a difficulty through what happened the other night that I suggest that this is really a providential occurrence, inasmuch as it affords them an opportunity of withdrawing from the mess into which some mischievous power has thrown them. If the Government would only accept this suggestion and agree to the appointment of a Committee they might begin to sit tomorrow if they liked, and after their investigation this matter might be taken up again, but in the meantime there are other matters of great importance which ought to occupy our attention. As I understand that we are to have a statement from the Government to-morrow night I think we are justified in making this suggestion.

*(7.19.) MR. MUNTZ (Warwickshire, Tamworth): It appears to me that hon. Gentlemen opposite have been under an entire misapprehension, and have evolved from their own inner consciousness the idea that it was the intention of the Government to appoint a Committee. If we are to accept the statement of the First Lord of the Treasury the Government had no intention of appointing such a Committee; at any rate, we on this side had no knowledge whatever of any such intention. Having evolved this idea from their own minds hon. Gentlemen opposite have employed very elaborate arguments as to the sinfulness that would be exhibited by the Government in attempting to pass this measure previous to the appointment of a Committee. I hope the Government will proceed with the passage of the Bill and leave for the future consideration of the House the question of the appointment of a Committee, which has only been taken into consideration to meet the views of hon. Gentlemen opposite.

*(7.20.) MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I think the hon. Member opposite, who has said he and his friends had no knowledge of the intention of the Government to appoint a Committee, has somewhat

misunderstood the remarks that were first made by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury. The right hon. Gentleman stated that there was no compensation in the Bill, and that among other subjects referred to the Committee would be that of compensation; but we all know that the Bill is a Compensation Bill, and that the course suggested would be merely putting the cart before the horse. We have heard the opinion of the President of the Board of Trade cited by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and I should also like to quote the words of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who said that the brewers and publicans would not be dissatisfied at the recognition of the important principle of compensation for licences in England and Wales. Here we have two of the most prominent Members of the Ministry actually contradicting the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the essential question with which we are now dealing.

MR. WILLIAM HENRY SMITH rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

(7.25.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 247; Noes 199.—(Div. List, No. 136.)

Question put accordingly, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."

(7.35.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 206; Noes 245.—(Div. List, No. 137.)

(7.56.) MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): In rising to move the omission from Clause 1, page 1, lines 18 and 19, of the words "as hereinafter mentioned," in order to insert the following words:—

> "As may be hereafter provided by any Act providing for the transfer to County Councils of the right of granting licences and for the increase of Licence Duties in respect of those houses whose profits are increased by the extinction of other licences, and until such Act is passed shall be invested and accumulated as provided by this Act,"

said: The announcement made by the Government to-night, that they intend to assent to the appointment of a Select Committee next Session to inquire and report on the question of compensation, and also upon other questions affecting the licensing laws, fully justifies the Amendment I have to propose, and will greatly strengthen my argument. I ask whether, if this Bill passes into law, and a Committee is appointed to consider the question of compensation, it is conceivable that any County Council would negotiate for the purchase of licences pending the Report of that Committee. I believe the Act will remain a dead letter. If this Bill is to pass into law it is most important, and, indeed, indispensable, if the County Councils are not to be at the mercy of the owners of licensed houses, and if public money is not to be wasted, that the powers of the Licensing Magistrates shall be transferred to the County Councils at the same time, and that power shall also be given to increase the Licence Duties on houses whose value is to be improved by the monopoly secured to them by the Bill. The Government will, I think, admit the importance or even the necessity of these two points, as they were both contained in their Bill of 1888, and it is very strange that they have been omitted from the present Bill, and that the Bill has been drawn on a line which precludes their being added as Amendments. I propose that the same method shall be adopted in respect of England until legislation on the important points I have adverted to shall have been adopted. Under the Bill as it now stands there will be two wholly independent authorities dealing with licences. The Magistrates will have the power of renewing annually or refusing to renew licences, and of issuing new licences. The County Councils will, on their side, be intrusted with power to buy up and extinguish licences out of public funds. The inevitable result of this double jurisdiction will be that the Magistrates will be paralysed in their action in respect of the cancelling of licences. They will refuse in the future to put in force their undoubted power of cancelling licences, even in the case of misconduct, still more in the case of an excessive number of licences. They will remember that Parliament has pointed out the method of purchase, and will consider that in future that new system relieves them of their responsibility. On the other hand, the County Councils, not being invested with the power to cancel licences, will practically be at the mercy of the owners of licences in their negotiations for the purchase of licences. They must submit to any terms that the owners or brewers may ask for. If some of the owners should be willing to sell, the County Council will find themselves in this difficulty—if the houses are bad ones, in the sense in which the President of the Local Government Board uses the term, the County Council will rightly think it a scandal to expend the public money in buying them up. If, on the other hand, the houses are good ones, they will think it almost as bad to buy up good houses, and to allow the bad ones to continue, and to enjoy the benefit of an increased monopoly. When the Bill was first issued I hastened to see what would be its probable effect in my own district in the country. I reside in a parish which affords a typical case of an excessive number of public houses—there are 11 licensed houses to a population of about 1,200. Many of them are of that class described by the President of the Local Government Board—the holders can only make a living by doing that which they ought not to do. Everyone admits that the number ought to be reduced. I agree with the hon. Member for Barrow that it would be useless to do away with only one or two of these houses. In order to produce a good effect there should be a much more substantial reduction than that; but what probability is there of the number of public houses in a district like this being reduced by the Bill? There is, first, the difficulty as to the means, for the proportion which will be available to the parish out of the fund which will come to the County Council will be only £22 a year. The whole share of Kent out of the money proposed to be allocated to the Councils would be £11,000 a year, of which this parish would receive £22, and with this it would take 150 years to buy up the public houses. Even assuming that the County Council deals with this district in an exceptional way, and devotes a larger sum to it than to other districts, what is the probability of their being able to carry into effect the operation in view? All the public houses I have referred to belong to the brewers, with one exception, and not to one or two big firms, but to a number of separate brewers; and my confident belief is that none of these brewers would be willing vendors. They have bought these houses for the purpose of distributing their beer, and they would be extremely unwilling to sell them, either to the Local Authorities or to anyone else. Many of the houses are of the character referred to by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, that is to say, only made to pay by doing that which they ought not to do. Some of the houses, no doubt, are well conducted and do not come within that category; but let me assume that the brewers who own the houses are prepared to sell them on their own terms to the Local County Council, there would then arise the difficulty of selection. How is the County Council to select houses for extinction? They must select the worst half or the best half. If they were to select the worst half, there would be the public scandal of public money being devoted to the purchase of bad houses, which ought to be closed without compensation. Such a purchase could not be for a moment justified. On the other hand, if it were proposed to purchase the better class of houses, the bad class would benefit by deriving all the profit of the monopoly. I venture, therefore, to think that the more the question is looked into the more difficult will it be for the County Council to work this subject of the purchase of licences. It would be a very different thing if the power of the Magistrates were transferred to the County Councils. If the County Councils were invested with the power to refuse to renew such licences their relation to the brewers and owners of those houses in the negotiations for their extinction would be a very different thing. I believe myself they would make short work with many of the houses referred to. They would refuse to renew licences, and no compensation would be found necessary to the brewers who owned them; and, in the cases of other houses of a better character, they would find no difficulty, with a little pressure, in compelling them to surrender licences on very reasonable terms. This leads me to the second part of my subject, namely, that power should be given to the County Council to increase the Licence Duty on those houses which are left in the immediate neighbourhood of those which have been extinguished. I think no one will deny that their value will be immensely increased. It is not necessary to suppose that where two houses exist and one is suppressed the other will sell as much liquor as the two; but it will sell a great deal more for the same expenses of management, and the profits, therefore, will be greatly increased, perhaps doubled; its value, therefore, will be doubled. That is the second part of my proposition, and, as an illustration of what I mean, I would refer to a case also in my own neighbourhood. In a hamlet not far from my house there are two licensed houses on opposite sides of the road, close to each other. They supply the country people immediately around, and no one can doubt that one of these licenses ought to be extinguished. They compete with one another in offering temptations to the people to drink. The two together do mischief, and one of them ought to be done away with, and I presume that if the Bill is to have any effect whatever, this is one of the cases in which it will apply. The houses belong to different brewers, and if one is done away with the value of the other would be largely increased, nearly doubled. I venture to think that the County Council would not be so unwise as to purchase one of these licenses unless it had also the power of raising the Licence Duty on the other. Ought this additional profit due to the expenditure of public money go to the owner of the house that is left? I think anyone will admit that there ought to be an increased Licence Duty levied on houses whose value is increased in this way; and I am surprised there is no clause in the Bill to this effect. The whole question of licenses ought to be re-considered. The great price of public houses is largely due to the monopoly we give them, and this monopoly is the creation of the State, and the licenses are quite insufficient in a vast number of cases. I feel certain that in a case such as I have mentioned a County Council would refuse to effect a purchase, on the ground that they would be adding greatly to the value of the adjoining premises without getting anything for it. I have no doubt the right hon. Gentleman will say he will be prepared to deal with the matter further next Session; but now is the time, when we are bestowing great benefits on the licensed houses, to exact something in return. If you lose this opportunity, you will not find it as easy with your friends, the holders of these licenses, to pass measures adverse to their interests. As a matter of general statesmanship, when you are conferring a great boon on a particular class, then is the time to take the opportunity of exacting from them something in return in the direction you think right and reasonable. You are conferring on the owners of licences three great advantages. You are recognising in them a vested interest—no one who heard the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer on Friday night can doubt that that is the effect of the measure. We hold that you are practically establishing these owners of licensed houses in every district in which they now exist, and conferring two other great boons on them. You are securing them from competition by statutory provision against the issue of new licences—exceptions being made in certain special cases. In the past they have had no security of that kind, and the competition in respect of new licences has only been limited by the discretion of the Magistrates. Now, for the first time, you are going to make a statutory prohibition against the issue of new licences. The third boon you are conferring on the publicans is the probability of competing houses being extinguished in their districts, for, wherever that takes place, the value of the licensed houses that are allowed to remain will be immediately increased in value. For these boons you get no equivalent. My belief is that the effect of the Bill as it now stands will be very small when it comes to be worked in the country. It is absolutely certain that in many parts of the country where the temperance agitation is strong the County Councils will object altogether to put the provisions into force, and in other parts of the country the County Councils will be unable to work the Act. The result will be that practically no licenced houses will be extinguished. I think, therefore, the wise course would be to adopt the terms of my Amendment, and postpone the putting in force of purchases of licences under the Act for the purpose of their extinction until the Local Authority has been invested with the powers magistrates now have of renewing or refusing to renew licences within its district, and until provision is made for increasing the Licence Duty of the houses which remain, and whose value will be increased by the increased monopoly conferred by this Bill.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, lines 18 and 19, to leave out the words "as hereinafter mentioned," and insert the words "as may be hereafter provided by any Act providing for the transfer to County Councils of the right of granting licences and for the increase of Licence Duties in respect of those houses whose profits are increased by the extinction of other licences, and until such Act is passed shall be invested and accumulated as provided by this Act."—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'as hereinafter mentioned' stand part of the Clause." (8.22.)

*(8.55.) Mr. RITCHIE: The right hon. Gentleman has repeated arguments which have been used over and over again, but I cannot complain, because it is almost necessary to do so in Amendments which touch the vital principle of of the Bill, and I must ask the right hon. Gentleman to pardon me and not to think me wanting in courtesy if I use arguments in reply that have been used before. The right hon. Gentleman at the outset referred to the Committee, which he said the Government have resolved to appoint. I will content myself by saying in reply that the right hon. Gentleman is mistaken if he supposes that the Government have resolved to appoint a Committee. The First Lord of the Treasury did, indeed, express a willingness to consent to certain points in the Bill, which some hon. Members thought were obscure and were open to consideration, being submitted to a Committee, but, in particular, I think the idea of a Committee originated with the noble Lord the Member for Paddington, and in connection with his measure. It is only on the understanding that the House itself desires the Committee, in order that the various points urged on both sides with regard to compensation may be considered, that the Government will think of assenting to it. Certainly I may assure the right hon. Gentleman that it is not the intention of the Government to propose any Committee, neither is it their intention, nor do they think it in the interest of the cause they have at heart, that the proposal they make in this Bill should be postponed until a Committee has been appointed. Having said so much about the question of the Committee, about which I do not desire there should be any misunderstanding, I will now proceed to refer to some of the other arguments used by the right hon. Gentleman. He has again said that this Bill recognises and sets up a vested interest in public houses. There is nothing new in this Bill, which recognises a vested interest, apart from the way in which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian has, in his speeches, recognised a vested interest. But, however that may be, I will again repeat that the Government have no intention of setting up any interest which does not already exist. They have stated over and over again their opinion that nothing in the Bill does this, and I again repeat that the Government have no intention of setting up any interest which does not already exist, and that, if there is any doubt on the subject, we are ready to accept Amendments to safeguard all the present powers of the Licensing Authorities. The right hon. Gentleman has alluded to the opinion he shares with those near him as to the effect of the Bill in its operation, and has given illustrations to show that the result of buying up the licences of some public houses would increase the value of others. I admit there may be cases in which the buying up of one public house would increase the value of others. That, however, is a result which would equally take place if the Licensing Justices were to exercise the discretion which it is argued they have of refusing to renew licences. But my answer with reference to these matters, and the illustrations the right hon. Gentleman gave, is that the County Councils may be trusted to exercise their discretion in matters of this kind. The right hon. Gentleman seems to think

that when this money is placed in the hands of County Councils it will at once be apportioned throughout every village in their county; but I do not believe a County Council would act in the manner suggested. In regard, also, to the question of good and bad houses, there is no indication or instruction in the Bill to County Councils of the kind referred to. County Councils are elected on a popular franchise, and represent the wishes of the localities returning them, and the members may be presumed to be selected because of their qualifications for carrying on the work entrusted to them; and I imagine in this, as in other matters, they will exercise a wise discretion. I do not believe that the County Councils will act in the manner suggested by the right hon. Gentleman, and although there may be cases in which it would seem useless to buy up one or two houses, because it would add to the value of others, yet there are large numbers of cases in which this power may be very judiciously exercised without creating any difficulty or leading to any of the dangers alluded to. Really, I think the answer to the whole of the right hon. Gentleman's objections has been given by himself. He said the County Councils would not be so unwise as to purchase the houses referred to. That, really, is the answer to the right hon. Gentleman. In the cases where there would be an injustice, or if it is not desirable that houses should be purchased, the County Council will turn their energies to other parts where the evil he dreads will not arise; and if the worst comes to the worst—if a County Council comes to the conclusion that they cannot act, and it is better to wait until they are charged with further powers—then the funds placed to the credit of the Council will accumulate, and no harm will be done. But it is a very different thing for the right hon. Gentleman to ask this Committee to pass a Resolution saying the Bill shall not come into operation until County Councils are charged with the control of licences. As the right hon. Gentleman knows, and as we have again and again said, an ultimate settlement cannot be found until a transfer of this control is made to these popularly-elected bodies. We have always advocated that; and when the right hon. Gentleman expresses surprise at not finding it in the present Bill, my answer is that the circumstances are wholly different to those in which, by the Local Government Bill, we proposed to transfer all the administrative functions of the Magistrates to the elected body. We should have been shutting our eyes to facts if we had not then made the proposal, and having changed the Licensing Authority—having altered it from a Judicial Authority bound by certain rules and considerations to a representative authority specially charged with giving expression to the will of the community as to the number of public houses to be licensed—we felt it was impossible to transfer this great interest to a newly-elected body without a change in the law, which, while recognising the licensing power created, recognised the change in the position of the new authority. We had to face the question whether or not some compensation ought to be provided when licences were taken away, because the people wished it.

SIR W. LAWSON: Compensation?

*MR. RITCHIE: We provided that. We did, of course, propose compensation, whether we were right or wrong in doing so. I am bound to say that if the whole question at that time had been considered in a calm, judicial, impartial manner, it is not at all impossible that a settlement might have been arrived at on conditions that might have been generally satisfactory. But, however, that opportunity passed away, and now the right hon. Gentleman is surprised not to find a proposal of the kind here. But this is not a licensing Bill; we are not dealing with the transfer of the Licensing Authority; we are not charging the County Councils with any compulsory power at all; therefore, it is not necessary to consider the question of compensation, or how it shall be calculated. The right hon. Gentleman fears that the action of Magistrates will be paralysed, but is he serious in insisting upon that? It is essential to consider what has been the action of Magistrates in the past. I do not believe that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite will be prepared to assert that the Licensing

Magistrates have exercised their power, if they possess it, of refusing to renew licences to any considerable extent.

MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.): It is constantly done in Scotland.

*MR. RITCHIE: I confess I am not familiar with the practice in Scotland. I am speaking on the English portion of the Bill and the action of Licensing Authorities here.

MR. CAINE: In Liverpool 199 licences have been refused in 17 years.

*MR. RITCHIE: I should like to analyse those figures. I am under the impression that in Liverpool at one time they had what is called free trade in licences, and, therefore, further explanation is required in order to elucidate the real significance of the reduction.

MR. STOREY: And 117 in Sunderland.

*MR. RITCHIE: In what period?

MR. STOREY: In the last 20 years.

*MR. RITCHIE: That is five in a year.

MR. STOREY: Your Bill enables us to get rid of two.

*MR. RITCHIE: I should like to know how many refusals there were because of faults in management, breaches of the law, or endorsements on licences? ["None."] However that may be, this is the first time I have heard anyone seriously assert that the powers of the Licensing Justices have been exercised, from the point of view of hon. Members opposite, in a satisfactory manner. The contention of the Government is—and nothing has been urged to show that the contention is invalid—that, looking to the number of licences which exist, the percentage of cases in which Magistrates have refused licences to properly-conducted houses is excessively small. And even if the Bill did paralyse the action of Magistrates in this respect, we might regard it, looking at other provisions of the Bill, with something like equanimity. But I entirely deny that it will have such an effect. The Government, as has been already mentioned, propose to put a provision in the Bill which states distinctly that, as far as Parliament is concerned, it is not intended that the operation of the Act should in any way hamper the Magistrates in the exercise of their powers. I do not believe that the insertion of any such words is necessary. I believe that the Bill itself will not have the effect of interfering with the discretion of the Magistrates. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton agrees it will not have that effect.

MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): Not legally, but morally.

*MR. RITCHIE: Morally, without the words we propose to insert? I venture to assert that whatever can be said of the effect morally—and I dispute it—if these words are inserted expressly reserving the powers and discretion of Magistrates, there is no force in the contention that the action of Magistrates will be paralysed by the action of this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman has said that the County Council will be completely at the mercy of the owner of a public house, as far as the price is concerned; but surely the right hon. Gentleman can hardly contend, when he is going into a shop to buy something which it is not necessary for him to buy, that he is at the mercy of the man who has the article to sell, and that he will have to give whatever price he demands? The right hon. Gentleman admits that there is no necessity for the County Council to buy a single public house, as he has spoken of the contingency of their letting the money lie idle.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I referred to the necessity of giving effect to a requisition from a district that the number of public houses is excessive.

*MR. RITCHIE: I altogether dispute that. The County Council has the executive control in the matter, and will not exercise their power to buy at whatever price the publican demands.

MR. STOREY: Then your Bill is useless.

*MR. RITCHIE: I am using the argument of the right hon. Gentleman. I am not using my own argument at all. I believe the Bill will be useful, and that a considerable number of public houses will be disestablished by the operation of the Bill. It is very inconvenient to carry on a conversational argument across the Table. I am endeavouring to show that, out of his own mouth, the right hon. Gentleman has answered his own argument. The truth of the matter, the main contention between the right hon. Gentleman and the Government, is whether this Bill should come into operation at once, or whether all operations should be postponed until the whole question of licensing is dealt with, together with the proposal that an increased Licence Duty should be put upon the other houses. That, of course, is the principle of betterment. Hardly anyone has ever contended that the principle of betterment is not sound in itself, if it can be applied without injustice; but there are enormous difficulties in the way of doing so in this case. There will be great difficulty in saying exactly what house will be benefited by the closing of another. If a public house is closed at one end of a town it confers no benefit on a house at the other end of the town. The proposal is to postpone the question of the reduction of licences to a time not specified. The Government desire to make some progress at once with respect to this matter, and they are not content to allow it to remain in the position which the right hon. Gentleman desires. They believe that much good may be done by such operations as are shadowed out in this Bill, and that it will be a misfortune if the Committee prevent the Government from enacting in this Bill the proposals they have made for enabling popularly elected bodies to deal with the money placed at their disposal for the extinction of licences in such a manner as they think proper and right.

*(9.24.) SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe): The question has been asked, why should the Government postpone all legislation on this subject? My reply is that, if the Government had brought in a Bill simply suspending the issue of new licences, it would have received general approval, and have been regarded as a common-sense measure on all sides of the House. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board has acknowledged that the proposals of the Government in 1888 were proposals for compensating the publicans. Those proposals dissatisfied the country, and the Government were obliged to drop them, but they have not learned the obvious lesson which that ought to have taught them. On behalf of a Lancashire constituency, I venture to say that the Government could not have made any proposals which would have made them so unpopular with the electors those as now before the House. The right hon. Gentleman complained, and, I think, most unnecessarily, that my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford had been guilty of repeating arguments previously brought forward.

*MR. RITCHIE: I do not know whether the right hon. Baronet was in the House at the time. I certainly made no such complaint. In point of fact, I said I did not see how he could well do otherwise.

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: Well, I am in the recollection of the House. The right hon. Gentleman said my right hon. Friend had been guilty of repeating arguments, and I think that came rather ill from the right hon. Gentleman, seeing that this Amendment raises an entirely new question. The right hon. Gentleman argued that the County Councils might be trusted to exercise their own discretion as to the degree to which they should put in force the provisions of this Bill. He seems to contemplate with remarkable complacency the probability to which my right hon. Friend called attention that the County Council will not exercise the powers entrusted to them by this Bill. I do not think, if I had proposed such a Bill, I should have regarded with complacency the prospect of the County Councils failing to exercise the powers given to them. I share the right hon. Gentleman's views that the County Councils will probably not exercise these powers.

*MR. RITCHIE: The right hon. Baronet must not put words into my mouth. I never expressed that view. On the contrary, I said I believed that they would exercise it largely for the benefit of the community. What I referred to was the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford, and I said he had answered himself out of his own mouth; because if the County Councils did not use the money, it would accumulate as he desired it to do under the operation of his Amendment.

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: I think that the Committee will agree with me that the right hon. Gentleman seemed to regard with great complacency the hypothesis that the County Councils would not, to any large extent, exercise their powers. I assure the right hon. Gentleman that, judging from the information which has come to me, it is extremely improbable that the Lancashire County Council will avail itself of the powers under this Bill so strong is the feeling on the question. Indeed, the sum to be allocated to the county is so small that it would be inadequate for the purpose of dealing even with one or two places in my own neighbourhood. If this part of the Bill is to be absolutely a dead letter, I do not regard with any satisfaction the spending of the time of the House upon it; and if time must be spent on a Bill, I should like to see some result. A strong argument in favour of the Amendment is furnished by the proposal which has leaked out to-night of a Committee to inquire into the whole subject. The result of the inquiry might be that there would be found for the funds a better use than that proposed by the Bill.

(9.30.) MR. J. G. TALBOT (Oxford University): I do not follow the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken in his objection to the proposals of the Government, nor in his reasons for supporting the Amendment of his right hon. Friend. If it is a matter of course that the funds will accumulate if they are not used, I cannot help asking why all this fury and rage against the proposals of the Government—proposals which, at the worst, are innocuous. What is expected by the Government is that a certain amount of result will follow from these powers to be given to the County Councils; and if that result does follow,

surely it will be a step in the right direction. We all desire, I take it, to see a gradual extinction of the present considerable number of public houses. I suppose that is the unanimous wish of the Members of this Committee; and, if that is so, then it is only a question of degree between hon. Gentlemen opposite and ourselves——

SIR W. HARCOURT: It is a question of method.

MR. J. G. TALBOT: Well, it does not appear that very much turns on the question of method. The right hon. Baronet who has just spoken says the funds will accumulate, and if that is so, then no harm will have been done. It appears to me that the desire of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford is to transfer the licensing authority from the Magistrates who now hold it to the County Council; and he thinks he sees in this Bill an endeavour to perpetuate the present system of licensing. I venture to differ from him *in toto.* Nothing has been advanced as yet to show that the County Councils would be better qualified to deal with licensing matters than are the Magistrates. But, at any rate, if the County Council is a body so admirably fitted to deal with this question as some hon. Members think, then they will be able, under this Bill, to show their capacity to the infinitesimal extent which it permits. I should like to go one step further. I wish that those who are so anxious to remove the licensing authority from the hands of Magistrates into the hands of the County Councils, would, before they embark on so great a fundamental change, say on what ground they think that the County Councils would do better than the Magistrates have done in the past. It has been stated that in Lancashire a large number of licences have been got rid of. If that is so, the Magistrates are doing what you desire, and why should you seek to substitute for them another authority? Is it not quite as likely that Magistrates, if they are worth anything at all—and I suppose there are some hon. Members who think they are not worth anything—is it not as likely that Magistrates who are in the habit of exercising judicial functions would be better able to deal with this question than a body which is subject to all the waves of popular opinion? Is it quite certain that a popularly-elected body would immediately diminish the number of public houses? I venture to assert that there is a good deal of public sympathy on the side of the public houses. I have had a great deal of experience as a Magistrate sitting in Petty Sessions; as Chairman of Quarter Sessions; and as Chairman of the County Licensing Committee; and I have found myself, as I think, very inadequately supported by public opinion. I have always been on the side of refusing all licences where possible, and have not granted any new licences, and I have found public opinion against me rather than on my side. I am consequently not quite so sure of public opinion. I do not know how it may be in the North. Possibly there are a few unhappy exceptional cases where the Magistrates have acted unwisely, and where public sentiment is on the other side, but I venture to say that in the South of England it must not be assumed that public opinion is on the side of those who desire to reduce the number of licensed houses. As to the Amendment, the result of passing it would be simply to leave things unchanged until there is time for further legislation; and that I do not think would be at all satisfactory, because no steps would be taken in the cause of temperance; no public houses would be suppressed by County Councils, and we should remain precisely as we now are. On reflection I hope that hon. Members will come to the conclusion that the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman is not one which can be accepted, whatever may be their opinions on the general merits of the Government proposals.

(9.42.) SIR W. HARCOURT: I do not wonder that the hon. Member wishes this question to be kept quite clear of the waves of public opinion, for, politically, he lives in an atmosphere in which County Councils are unknown.

MR. J. G. TALBOT: I am a member of one.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I was, of course, alluding to the hon. Gentleman as a member for a University. The speech just made reminded me that, when I was at the Home Office, I received a deputation of Magistrates from the County of Kent, including the hon. Member, who came to me in despair and said, "In Kent we are overwhelmed by the number of public houses; we do not know what to do; and we come to you, as Home Secretary, to take measures to diminish the number." I listened with great respect; but, when they had exhausted their eloquence in denouncing the public houses, I said, "Gentlemen, I am pleased but surprised to see you; but you, the Magistrates, create these public houses; you issue the licences and renew them. Why do not you reduce the number yourselves? You are the authors of the evil; why do not you put an end to it?" One gentleman, less discreet than the rest, said, "We are afraid to do it; we want somebody else to do it." I answered, "And so you want me to accept the unpopularity which you have not the courage to face." And yet the hon. Member argues in favour of keeping the jurisdiction in the hands of the Magistrates in the County of Kent, and against transferring it to the County Council, which would be influenced by waves of public opinion. I told the deputation that I thought the power ought to be given to the County Council, exactly because that wave of popular opinion would give a little muscle, a little spirit, a little courage to the Licensing Body—qualities in which the Magistrates of the County of Kent are apparently deficient. I am not the least hostile to the Magistrates in this matter. In my opinion, the Magistrates possess a strong sense of the existing evil. The President of the Local Government Board says that no one in the House has asserted that the Magistrates have done anything in this matter. I have ventured to assert that they have, and I have referred to a Return which does not come down to the present time by four years, in which it is shown that the Magistrates have shut up off-licences by the hundred, and fully-licensed public houses by the score. I defy contradiction to that statement, and, so far as the title to compensation is concerned, I hold that the off-licences should stand on the same footing as the fully-licensed houses. I have moved for a Return of the last four years, and I shall be greatly surprised if, with the growth of public opinion, with the knowledge of the law, which in spite of the Law Officers of the Crown, is spreading throughout the country, the Magistrates, knowing now that they have the power, do not exercise it far more freely and courageously than otherwise would have been the case. I do not assert that what has been done by the Magistrates is altogether satisfactory. They might have gone a great deal further. If they had allowed the police to know that they wished disorderly houses to be reported, this would have been done, and many houses would have been shut up. Every one living in the country districts is aware that the police know it is no part of their duty to report public houses, and this is the reason why many of them have not been shut up. The President of the Local Government Board has rung the changes on the question as to whether this Bill will or will not be used by the County Councils. I venture to say that there is not one Council in 10 which will dare to use it. The London County Council has already pronounced its verdict; and the Committee know that in this great Metropolis the Bill, if passed, will not be used. My right hon. Friend the Member for the Clitheroe Division of Lancashire speaks with the highest authority on behalf of Lancashire. I speak on behalf of a smaller community, consisting of 100,000 persons, and the notion of proposing to the Town Council of Derby that they should use this Bill is ridiculous. From the moment this Bill passes the entire influence of the Temperance Party will be brought to bear on the County Councils throughout the country. An agitation will begin—it has begun already in the country—and the first object of the Temperance Party will be to make it impossible for any County Council to use the Bill for the purpose intended. The Unionist Party consider themselves to be very strong in the West, but the Committee have heard a voice from Cornwall this evening. Does anyone believe that a County Council in Cornwall will use this Bill? The notion is ridiculous; and, yet, here is the Government proposing taxation which everyone knows will not be employed. But the Government are going to save their honour, as it is called—it is not saving a great deal—on a silly matter of punctilio, knowing, as they do, that they are wasting the time of the Committee, wasting the money of the people, in raising it for purposes for which it is not wanted, and placing it in the hands of bodies which will never use it, because their constituents will not allow them. The right hon. Gentleman says that the Amendment involves the whole licensing question. But we cannot deal with this question in a piecemeal way. The Government cannot introduce a measure dealing with public houses and their purchase without raising the whole licensing question. What is the pressure which has induced the Government to hang out a flag in the shape of the suggested Committee? Because the Government know that their Bill has raised the whole licensing question. I shall be glad to know what was the decision arrived at when, as has been pointed out, the First Lord of the Treasury and the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale retired behind the Speaker's Chair. The Leader of the House and the noble Lord went out together, and they came back together; and I should like to know what decision was come to behind the Chair. It is said, however, that this money is to accumulate. What is the use of accumulating money when it is not known what is to be done with it? This is the finance of the great Liberal Unionist financier. This is the modern finance of the Conservative Party. A more ridiculous system it is impossible to conceive. The money, I suppose, will be put in a stocking and buried until some one finds out a better purpose to which to apply it. I think that this is an absurd proposal, and I shall support the Amendment of my right hon. Friend.

(9.59.) THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. LONG, Wilts, Devizes): The right hon. Gentleman has made a speech characterised by humour of a friendly nature. It has been listened to with great interest and with much less dissatifaction than is usually felt when he indulges at the expense of hon. Members on this side;

but I confess that, after listening to it with the greatest care, I am at a loss to comprehend on which side the right hon. Gentleman was speaking—whether he advocated the Amendment or whether he was condemning the Bill without advocating the Amendment. The Committee have been told that if the money is not spent under this proposal by the County Council it would accumulate. But this is exactly the proposal of the Amendment—that the money shall not be set apart for a specific purpose, but accumulated until certain other processes had taken place. The right hon. Gentleman, however, denounced this process of accumulation. If the right hon. Gentleman's speech tended in any direction at all, it tended to the direction of proving that the taxation of the people for a purpose of this kind is bad, and ought not to be sanctioned by Parliament. But what I would point out to the Committee is that the principle was affirmed on the Second Reading. The sum total of the speeches we have heard from the right hon. Gentleman amount to this: that in certain places and cases the County Council will not exercise their power, sometimes because they are not sufficient and sometimes because they dare not; because, as the right hon. Gentleman has reminded us, the question will be removed from the House of Commons to the counties, and the County Councillors will be told that if they use these powers they will lose their places. Supposing the right hon. Gentleman does succeed in causing the County Councils not to use these powers, what disastrous result will ensue? The only disaster will be that the money will be accumulated; and when the time comes for which the right hon. Gentlemen is so anxiously waiting, and when it will be his fortune to sit upon this side of the House, what an enormous advantage he will have conferred upon him. He will then have in his hand these accumulations, and what an opportunity will be afforded him and his friends to make proposals of a better and more satisfactory character. The point of view from which we regard the proposals is, that they will afford facilities for diminishing the number of public houses without any injustice to the owners of those houses. But whether we are right or wrong in that view, and if the County Councils do not exercise their powers, no harm will have been caused. The money will have been set apart, and it will form a very comfortable nest-egg for the right hon. Gentleman opposite to deal with. I think we are justified in asking the Committee to resist this Amendment, and to adhere to the proposals of the Government. Nobody has pointed out that any real advantage will accrue from the powers of this Amendment. Some speeches have been made in its support, but only because they were against the principle of the Bill. Very little has been said on the Amendment, but a great deal has been said against the principle of the measure; and we have had general speeches on the Bill over and over again in Committee. Well, Sir, it is sufficient for us that we do not share the doubts, apprehensions, and fears which are entertained by hon. Gentlemen opposite. We do not see any sufficient reason to believe that there is any necessity to make provision for these powers proposed by the Amendment, and, therefore, we ask the Committee to stand by the proposals as we have submitted them to the House, and to reject the Amendment the right hon. Gentleman has proposed, and which received such equivocal applause on the other side of the House.

(10.5.) MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): The Amendment moved by my right hon. Friend presents a test both of the sincerity and the earnestness of the Government as to their desire to extend temperance and diminish the number of public houses. What we complain of is that the power conferred upon the County Council is of no practical value whatever. No genuine results can flow from it. My right hon. Friend the Member for Derby made reference to the view which the County Council of London has expressed upon this matter. A few days ago I had a representation from the Town Council of Bradford. By a majority of 24 to five the Town Council of Bradford has passed a resolution praying the Government to abandon these clauses dealing with licences and compensation. We complain that this

Bill establishes an enormous legal claim to compensation on the one side; while, on the other hand, the powers conferred on the County Councils to diminish the number of public houses of an improper and mischievous character are of no value whatever. Now, the Amendment of my right hon. Friend would clothe them with genuine and substantial power. While, on the one hand, they would be disposed to deal with some consideration for the publicans, on the other hand they would not be prepared to buy at extravagant prices the interests established in licences. If this Bill is passed, instead of the Magistrates being quickened in the exercise of the powers they now possess, I am convinced that it cannot be for a moment pretended that the Magistrates will take upon themselves the unpopular duty of suppressing public houses. Supposing the County Councils want to get rid of some of these houses, the only power left in their hands is to distribute the money placed at their disposal. In the town of Bradford the annual sum would be about £3,000, which would only enable two public houses every three years, or three every two years, to be closed. Who can pretend that, out of 500 houses, such a dealing with the question is a genuine grappling with the evil? I can only say that the Government will be wisely advised if they abandon for the time being these provisions as to licences. We believe that in the country the Government will be held responsible for acting frivolously, so far as concerns their grappling with this licensing system. They are offering a gigantic bribe to the liquor interest, and conferring enormous profits on the brewers of this country. Until the Government have an opportunity of dealing with the licensing question on a larger scale, we should not have thrown at our heads a proposal of this kind, which will involve the country in an enormous burden, for the benefit of the brewers and publicans. I can corroborate what has been said by hon. Members as to the feeling outside. Since I have come into the House of Commons I have never had so many representations and Petitions on any subject as I have received upon this question; nor have I known proposals against which greater indignation has been expressed than those which we are now discussing.

*(10.17.) MR. WHARTON (Ripon): It has been suggested that when I spoke on the Second Reading of the Bill, I said I should be able to persuade the County Council of Durham to express approval of the Bill. If I said anything of the sort I should be guilty of overweening confidence and great impropriety. What I said had reference to the way in which this Bill would work. I said that the County Councils would propose a Licensing Committee, who would put themselves in communication with the owners of public houses—by no means always the brewers, as some seem to suppose. They would make a selection of the public houses it was desirable to acquire, and they would then deal with the owners if the prices asked were reasonable. If I said anything which pledged the Durham County Council, I should be unworthy to be Chairman of that body. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Clitheroe Division spoke for the County Council of Lancashire as if he pledged it. I do not think he meant it, because he had no right to do so. He spoke of the small sum which Lancashire would have to deal with. I do not see him in his place. If he were, I would remind him of a speech made at Birmingham in the year 1883, when a man, whose opinion he will respect, stated that £15,000 a year would suffice for a scheme similar to this. If that sum was sufficient for Birmingham with its teeming population, surely £50,000 is not a sum to be disregarded or refused by Lancashire. Now, Mr. Bright's scheme for Birmingham was entirely on all fours with this scheme. It was a scheme whereby £15,000 a year was to be obtained from the Drink Tax, to be applied partly in aid of local taxation, and partly in reduction of the superfluous public houses. With regard to the method in which this ought to be done, I say it ought to be left to the County Council. It is said that the County Councils would not adopt this scheme, and I do not know on what ground this is stated. At any rate,

I do not believe it. I should be wrong to speak on behalf of my own County Council, but I should say that if they did not adopt the scheme they would have to reckon with the men who sent them there. I quite understand the opinion of hon. Gentlemen opposite, but I do not believe it is the opinion of the country. I believe that when those who send representatives to the County Councils, see that this is a plan by which the superfluity of public houses might be put an end to, and that Gentlemen opposite have nothing to propose to effect that object, they will sustain Her Majesty's Government, and the common-sense of the country will adopt their plan. Of course, no one of sane mind supposes that we are going to do away with all the public houses of the country at one fell swoop, and when we hear of £250,000,000 being spent for this object it is hardly possible to understand how any man in his sober senses could have made such a suggestion as that. Here, at any rate, we have a scheme for doing away with the superfluity of public houses, and I believe that the good sense of the country will be disposed to adopt that scheme.

(10.18.) MR. STOREY : The hon. Gentleman who has just spoken has told us he represents a County Council of Durham. I also have the honour to be a member of the County Council of the largest town in Durham, and when the hon. Member says that if we do not adopt this proposal we shall have to reckon with our constituents, I reply that if he and the County Council of Durham do deal with the purchase of licences, as proposed by this Bill, they certainly will have to reckon with their constituents. The hon. Gentleman has referred to the necessity of putting down the superfluous public houses, but I would remind the House that he is Chairman of the Quarter Sessions of the County of Durham, and that he and his brother Magistrates already possess the power.

*MR. WHARTON: Not in Quarter Sessions.

MR. STOREY: What I mean is that he and his brother Magistrates, the Licensing Justices of the County, have at present full power to put an end to superfluous public houses, and I will go further, and say they ought to do this if they do their duty, but instead of this the hon. Gentleman suggests to this Committee that money ought to be provided by the people of this country to enable him to pay for the extinction of public houses which he and his friends ought to have extinguished themselves. Speaking of the Amendment before the Committee I cannot deny that if it be carried it will render the Bill inoperative, that is to say, that the money, instead of being used by the County Councils, will be tied up and suffered to accumulate as a fund to be used hereafter, let us hope, more wisely. I make the Government this free admission, but I want them, as fair minded men, to meet me on this ground and to consider what is the precise amount of loss their present proposal would amount to, because by ascertaining that we shall ascertain the measure of what my right hon. Friend (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) proposes to prevent us from doing, because in all these cases we must argue from the means we possess. In Sunderland there are 254 licensed houses, and the Bill would enable two of these to be extinguished per annum, but there is another important provision in the Bill which will enable us, if we choose, to borrow money, to borrow three times the amount otherwise placed annually at our disposal so as to put an end to a certain additional number. Yes, but under that additional clause we shall be held to have exhausted our power until such time as we can refund the whole amount we have borrowed. That is to say, supposing we in Sunderland borrowed three times the beggarly amount proposed to be given annually by this Bill, we should have been at the end of the three years able to have extinguished six of the 254 licensed houses, leaving us still with 248. That is the full measure of the power proposed to be conferred upon us. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford proposes to limit this power still further by tying it up altogether, the difference between my right hon. Friend and the Government, in the mind of all who care for temperance reform, being the difference between "Tweedledum and tweedledee." But I support the Amendment of my right hon. Friend, not because I want nothing to be done, but because I want a great deal more done, and I can see in that Amendment a common sense and reasonable way of arriving at a solution of this question. I cannot help thinking that the President of the Local Government Board, who has shown himself to be a practical, shrewd, and liberal-minded man, must really see in this Amendment the secret of the success of any Minister who will take the proposal up. What does my right hon. Friend suggest? He suggests that the right, reasonable, and fair way of acquiring funds for the buying up of public houses is to tax the remaining public houses, and it is because the Amendment embodies that principle that I shall support it in the Division Lobby. His proposal means that, if we buy one public house, the remaining public houses ought to bear an enhanced Licence Duty sufficient to pay the cost of the purchase. Take a case in my own district. Of 35 public houses, 28 belong to two men. Suppose the Sunderland Town Council put an end to 14 of the 28. Who is to benefit? You may say the public; doubtless that is so, but who else benefits? Clearly the two brewers who own the 28, and who then will own the 14 left of them, first of all, by obtaining a substantial sum from the public purse, and, secondly, because the whole of the business that used to be done by 28 houses can now be done by 14, thereby largely reducing their annual expenditure over the distribution of their drink. Therefore, I shall always hold that neither this Ministry, which I do not think will be a Ministry very long, or any which may hereafter exist can settle this thorny problem unless they provide in some way that will be just to decent people who have invested their property in this business. I freely admit this, the contention being who is to make the necessary provision. The Government say it should be made by those who drink; I say it should be made by those who retain the monopoly of the sale of drink. My right hon. Friend's Amendment indicates this solution of the difficulty. I heartily concur with him, and shall support his Amendment. When I first saw this Amendment on the Paper I did not think it so valuable as I now think it. I thought it rather went beyond what is reasonable, but this afternoon's transactions have given it greater importance. What do those transactions amount to? Why to this, that the Government either have promised, or mean to promise, a Committee to consider this matter. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) shakes his head, but we are all accustomed to the progressive movements of Governments. Since the time I have been in this House, I have frequently seen Ministers promising a little one day in order that they might promise a great deal another day. The right hon. Gentleman knows that after what has passed this afternoon, there can be no settlement of this question until it has been considered by a Commitee. My right hon. Friend's Amendment proposes that the money offered by the Bill shall be tied up and held until such time as Parliament, after due deliberation, and after the Report of the proposed Committee, shall determine. That seems to me an exceedingly cautious and sensible proposal, and I beg, therefore, to give it my support.

(10.28.) MR. LABOUCHERE: I hope the Government will be able to deal with this question without indemnifying every person who has invested his property in the beer traffic. I do not agree with my hon. Friend that every shareholder in a brewery ought to be indemnified. These men have gone into a purely speculative business and taken their chance, and if they are unsuccessful, why should the British taxpayer be called upon to recoup them?

MR. STOREY: I do not wish my hon. Friend to misunderstand me. There are a number of people who have entered into this business and have been trained to it, and others who have inherited businesses of this kind. Before this question can be settled, the equitable claims of such persons will have to be met, but my point is that such compensation should come, not from the public purse but from the remaining licence-holders.

MR. LABOUCHERE: When my hon. Friend speaks of the inheritors he forgets that the persons who inherit, inherit the chances. I quite agree with my hon. Friend that, perhaps, some small compassionate allowance might be granted to the actual occupier or licensee—that is to say, I would not give it myself, but if I found some Government proposing it I should probably move an Amendment against it, but that would not prevent me voting for the third reading of the Bill. I must certainly support the Amendment on its merits. There are exceedingly few Amendments proposed by a conscientious Liberal and opposed by a Conservative Government which would not have me for a supporter in reference to a Bill of this kind. I not only support this Amendment on these general principles but on its merits. It is most desirable that there should be only one body to deal with the whole matter of licences. If the power of licensing remains in the hands of the Magistrates a man may refuse to sell to the County Council save at an excessive price. But if the County Council be made the Licensing Authority it will be able to point out to the man that if he will not sell at a reasonable price he may not get a renewal at all. A Committee is, it now appears, to be appointed to inquire into this whole question of licensing. The only possible legislation will be to vest the County Councils with the Licensing Authority. They will then have the power to get the public houses at a far less price than they can do now when the publicans can fall back on the Magistracy. These Magistrates are the most objectionable tribunal in the world. They are a Conservative tribunal. In almost every case the Lords Lieutenant are Conservatives and great noblemen. One or two of them are Liberals, and in these counties, perhaps, the Magistracy is better than in other counties. We know that lately the brewers have made an alliance with the peers, and a brewer is now almost the same thing as a peer. They will act, as they have acted, together. The whole reason why this Bill is deemed necessary by the Government is that the Magistrates have granted an excessive number of licences to their friends. We may estimate that they will, without any regard to the requirements of a particular place, renew the licences year after year. The brewer will say to the County Council, "I really do not care whether you refuse my house unless you give me an enormous sum for it; I am perfectly safe with my friends the Lord Lieutenant and the Magistrates." Under these circumstances, I think it would be far wiser, from a Government point of view, to put off this proposal until you have made the renewer of the licence the same authority as the purchaser of the public house. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury tells us that he is actuated by so desperate a desire to render this country temperate that he cannot wait for another year. We all know that that is mere House of Commons talking. Surely he can wait for another year in order to deal thoroughly with the subject. It is true it does sound somewhat absurd to tax the people without allowing the proceeds of the tax to be expended for one or two years. That, however, is not our fault. The clause that enables you to tax and to devote the tax to a certain purpose has been already passed. We really do conscientiously believe that the best thing will be to put off the expenditure of this money until the Committee has held its inquiry and presented its Report.

(10.38.) MR. J. ELLIS (Leicestershire, Bosworth): I have talked this matter over with Conservatives and Liberal Unionists, as well as Liberals, in my own part of the country, and I have not met with a single man who did not condemn the present mess into which the Government have got themselves. Most of them were in favour of a compromise, something like that proposed in the present Amendment. They said it was quite impossible for the County Council to make use of the powers given them by this Bill, but they saw a wiser and better way in the direction hinted at by the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey), namely, that some very moderate amount of payment should be fixed by Parliament, and should be obtained by raising the Licence Duties. I do not believe that if you close 14 public houses out of the 28, as much would be drunk in the remaining 14 as in the 28. But the 14 would be better managed, and would be more valuable, and it would be perfectly fair that they should pay increased taxation in order to pay at a moderate rate for the closing of the rest. In Leicestershire the publican no longer owns his public house. I, for one, will do all I can not only to stop the Bill, but to support this Amendment.

(10.40.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 232; Noes 199.—(Div. List, No 138.)

(10.58.) THE CHAIRMAN: I have some doubt whether the next Amendment on the Paper, in the name of the hon. Member for Carnarvon (Mr. Lloyd-George), and proposing that the share of the money apportioned to Wales and Monmouth shall be applied for such purposes as a Joint Committee of such counties under the Local Government (England and Wales) Act, 1888, may direct, is in order, especially in view of an Amendment to Clause 3 proposing that the money payable to Scotland shall be put under the control of the Members representing the constituencies of Scotland. That Amendment, however, is clearly out of order. The present Amendment deals with an organisation already created, and, therefore, I think, it is in order.

*MR. RITCHIE: On the question of order, Sir [*Cries of* "Order"], it is perfectly true that under the Local Government Act of 1888, Joint Committees are allowed to be set up for matters which are common to the several counties which appoint Joint Committees; but I venture to urge upon you, Sir, that the Local Government Act gives no countenance to the setting up of Joint Committees with special reference to a matter which has reference to the whole of the counties of England and Wales.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Is it to be understood, Sir, that we are to argue your ruling? Because, if so, we may spend the rest of the evening at it. I suppose this is another method the Government have invented for saving the time of the House. Unless, Sir, you intimate that that is to be the course, I shall assume that your decision rules the Debate.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is quite in order, and it is the habitual practice, to address the Chair on the subject of its decision. But I do not think that the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman affect the decision which I have already given.

*(11.2.) MR. S. T EVANS (Glamorganshire, Mid): In the absence of my hon. Friend the Member for Carnarvon Boroughs (Mr. Lloyd-George) I beg to propose to insert, in page 1, line 19, after the word "mentioned"—

> "That in the Counties of Wales and the County of Monmouth so much of such sum as shall, under the provisions hereinafter contained, be apportioned to the said several counties shall be applied for such purposes as a Joint Committee of such counties, nominated under the 81st section of the Local Government (England and Wales) Act, 1888, may direct."

We have been told by the President of the Local Government Board that the provisions of the Bill are not compulsory—in other words, that the County Councils need not use the money which is allocated to Wales for the purpose the Government have in view. We have also been told that if the County Councils do not care to use the money as is desired, the money will not be lost to them, but that it will stand to the credit of the counties, and, in fact, be hung up until Parliament determines what application it shall have. There is a good deal of uncertainty as to this unfortunate Bill. It is uncertain whether it is brought forward in the interest of temperance, or of the brewer and the publican. It is uncertain, say the Government, whether the Bill involves compensation or not; and, from what has been said to-night, it is uncertain whether a Committee is to be appointed to consider the whole question of licensing. But one thing is absolutely certain with regard to Wales, and that is, that not a single County Council in the whole of the Principality, including Monmouthshire, will use the money for the purpose of compensation for licences. That being so, is it not better to provide by the Bill that a Joint Committee of the whole of the County Councils in the Principality shall decide in what way the money shall be applied

A Joint Committee, consisting of Representatives of all the Welsh County Councils, will be an important body, and the House will do well to leave to their discretion—a wise discretion I am sure it will be—the application of the funds.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 19, after the word "mentioned," to insert the words "and in the counties of Wales and the county of Monmouth so much of such sum as shall, under the provisions hereinafter contained, be apportioned to the said several counties shall be applied for such purposes as a Joint Committee of such counties, nominated under the eighty-first Section of 'The Local Government (England and Wales) Act, 1888,' may direct."—(*Mr. Samuel Evans.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*(11.8) MR. STUART RENDEL (Montgomeryshire): I hope the Government will not regard this Amendment as in any sense a peg on which to hang a dilatory Debate. It has been introduced with the unanimous consent of the Welsh Liberal Members, and has the approval of the vast majority of the Welsh people, a majority far exceeding in number the constituents who return the 27 Liberal Members, a majority which includes no inconsiderable proportion of the Conservative element in Wales. I shall be very much interested to see whether any Member from Wales who sits opposite will venture to rise to oppose the Amendment. The case of Wales is one which I think deserves some separate consideration on the part of the Government. It is well known that the introduction of this Bill has created a far more profound feeling in Wales, than even in any other part of the Kingdom. The intensity of the feeling must be known to the Government by the vast number of Petitions that have come up from every quarter of Wales on the subject. It cannot be said that the Petitions are in any sense manufactured; upon the face of them they bear every evidence of spontaneity. They represent a sincere and earnest feeling quite apart from politics. They come simultaneously from innumerable small bodies of men scattered throughout all Wales, acting from a common impulse. The Representative Bodies in Wales have never lost an opportunity of solemnly recording their disapprobation of the proposals of the Government. I would point out that the great bulk of the petitioners have treated this Bill as one introducing the principle of compensation, which the President of the Local Government Board nevertheless declares not to be found within the four corners of the Bill. And I would ask how it comes that this House has received and accepted their Petitions if it be the fact that there is no compensation in the Bill? The feeling in Wales against the Bill is, of course, mainly directed against what they believe to be the principle of compensation contained in it, and it is for this reason that it is impossible, as was most truly said by a Welsh Member, that Wales should touch this money if it is to be applied to the extinction of licences; they regard it as unclean. It is not only the Representative Local Bodies of minor importance that have protested against the Bill, but even the County Councils have lost no opportunity of doing so. Such of the County Councils as have met since the introduction of the Bill have recorded their strong disapproval of the measure. I, therefore, appeal to the Government to consider the case of Wales separately, on the ground of the special and unanimous feeling of Wales. In urging this claim, I would point out that the liquor question has already received separate treatment in Wales. The Welsh Sunday Closing Act was a tribute of this House to the feeling of Wales on the question of temperance, and we all know that the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the working of the Act, instead of as some hoped barring the Act, blessed the Act, not so much on the ground of experience as on the ground of the unanimity of the feeling of the Welsh people in favour of the Act. What we ask is, that Parliament, having already given Wales exceptional and special legislation with regard to the liquor traffic in the sense of restricting it, should not now offer to Wales the insult of proposing that she should devote her share of this £350,000 to giving a statutory vested interest, as she considers, to the drink trade. If there is unanimity in Wales,

and if there is precedent for the separate treatment of Wales in regard to the liquor traffic, there is equal unanimity with regard to the desirability of spending some such sum as this in the promotion of education, and equal precedent for the separate treatment of Wales in the matter of education. Parliament, by the Act which I had the honour of introducing last Session, has given Wales the separate and distinguished right of levying a rate in aid of intermediate education, and I have no hesitation in asserting that if the County Councils of Wales and Monmouthshire became entitled, under Section 81 of the Local Government Act, to combine for the purpose of determining the form in which this money should be expended, they would decide it should go towards intermediate education. I am sorry I do not see the Vice President of the Council in his place, because he would understand what it would mean if Wales could only have the £30,000 a year which may fall to her out of this sum for the purpose of education.

THE CHAIRMAN: The question of appropriating the money to the purposes of education was discussed upon the Amendment of the hon. Member for Rotherham.

*MR. STUART RENDEL: I feel, Sir, your ruling is right. I am sorry I lost the opportunity I frequently sought, of stating these views on the Amendment of my hon. Friend. I ask the President of the Local Government Board to consider how unreasonable it is to say to Wales, Unless you use this money as is suggested it must accumulate. Is it practical or business-like to leave the destination of the money uncertain? Why not at once determine the destination? Why not say that the disposal of the money shall be left to the County Councils? We tell you if you will simply give the money to the County Councils in Wales there can be no doubt they will use it in a manner which is not only in accordance with their most earnest convictions, but is in furtherance of the policy and working of an Act for which you took credit in the Queen's Speech, and which, I believe, you sincerely desire to foster. You will

Mr. Stuart Rendel

avoid giving deep pain and offence to large numbers of your own friends in the Principality. You will be acting in accordance with adequate precedents, and you will be promoting the success of an important Welsh measure which you seek to claim as your own.

*(11.19.) MR. RITCHIE: Mr. Courtney, after the expression of opinion that has just fallen from you, I shall not attempt to answer the hon. Member's arguments as to the propriety of devoting this money towards the advancement of education in Wales. I object to the Amendment on two grounds. In the first place, it proposes to reverse the decision of the Committee that the sum of £350,000 per annum should be applied for the extinction of licences in England. I object to the statement that Wales is not included in England.

*MR. STUART RENDEL: I believe we passed an Act last Session, in which it was agreed that Wales should not be included in England unless specifically named.

*MR. RITCHIE: I beg the hon. Member's pardon. No such Act was ever passed, and if any such proposal had been made I should have resisted it most strenuously. Wales was included in that Act, but it was never intended that where Wales was not specifically included it should be excluded. In that Act we, no doubt, endeavoured to meet the sentimental desire expressed by Members for Wales that "Wales" should be added to "England." It was never contended that Wales would have been excluded if the name had not been added. On the contrary, it was argued at the time that without any mention of Wales, England, by statute, included Wales. My second objection to the Amendment is, that it proposes to set up a sort of National Council in Wales for the administration of this money. I have no doubt that you, Sir, have felt yourself completely justified in allowing this Amendment to be put, by the fact that, under the Local Government Act, arrangements were made by which Joint Committees might be set up, and, although I am not objecting to your ruling, I would point out that the proposals in the Local Government Act are very different in connection with the establishment of Joint Committees to those which are proposed in this Amendment. What was proposed in the Local Government Act was, that a Joint Committee might be set up to deal with any administrative question, such as the pollution of rivers, which was common to two or more counties. The same provision applied to England, but it could never be contended that England could set up a Joint Committee of all its counties for the purpose of disposing of money appropriated to England. Nor could it be contended that any such idea was ever in the mind of the framers of the Act of 1888, or in the mind of Parliament when the Act was passed. In fact, if I am not much mistaken, the question arose on some Amendment which was proposed and expressly negatived by the House. The hon. Member said it was an insult to Wales to hand this money over to the Councils for the purpose of dealing with an admitted evil. I admit that the amount is not sufficient for any large purpose, but the hon. Member can hardly contend that the placing of a sum of money in the hands of the County Councils to remedy what we consider to be an existing evil, is an insult to Wales or its County Councils. Nothing of the kind was ever intended, and it is the greatest straining of language to say that it was so intended.

*(11.26.) MR. BOWEN ROWLANDS (Cardiganshire): I do not think any advantage would be gained by discussing now whether, by the proper interpretation of the language of the statutes, England includes Wales or not. The question is whether Wales should not be excluded from that which we regard as a series of most baneful provisions. Hitherto Wales has been exceptionally treated, and especially in regard to the drink traffic. I do not myself attach any importance to the use of the word "sentimental." If it be sentimental on the part of the Welsh people to desire to encourage temperance, or to enrol themselves in the ranks of those who wish to stop the progress of the greatest evil which has for generations cursed this country, then I say that what you call sentimentalism is a thing to be encouraged and fostered. That such a feeling does exist is proved by the resolutions arrived at throughout Wales, and the unanimity with which this destructive proposition is condemned. I myself presented a Petition to this House from the Assembly representing the Calvinistic Church, something like 250,000 or 300,000 persons. Since then I have poured into the somewhat reluctant arms of the right hon. Gentleman Resolutions and Petitions by the score. I give the right hon. Gentleman credit for sincerity when he says this Bill was introduced in the belief that it would meet with the approval of the supporters of temperance in the country. But not only from teetotallers but from all who take an interest in temperance reform there came an unanimous cry of disapprobation of these clauses, and we have had an agreement from the other side of the House in that disapprobation expressed in a startling manner——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must direct his argument to the special Amendment before the Committee.

*MR. B. ROWLANDS: I bow to your ruling, Sir, of course, and I pass on to the right hon. Gentleman's argument that there is no available body created by statute which could properly be entrusted with the management of these funds. He was obliged to confess, and readily did so, that the Joint Committee, to be nominated under the Local Government Bill, was not for such a purpose, but was intended to deal with such matters as the pollution of rivers. I do not know what led him to think that a general Council or Committee would be more properly exercised in dealing with such a subject; there is no language in the Bill that can be construed into such a limitation.

*Mr. RITCHIE: As an illustration of what I meant, I pointed out that when it was desired to form a Joint Committee of all the Councils of England and Wales they had to come to Parliament to get express statutory powers for the purpose.

*Mr. B. ROWLANDS: Such statutory powers as this Amendment desires we urge the Government to grant. The point I make is this, that the Joint Committee need not be confined to objects such as the right hon. Gentleman mentioned. Here is a question more serious than the pollution of rivers, a gigantic moral pollution which we seek to avert, and we appeal to the Government to assist us in our effort by allowing County Councils the free expression of their opinions in regard to the application of these funds. The Government are in this dilemma, either the application they propose is popular in Wales and Monmouthshire, or it is not. If it is popular, then there will be no question of the application being in the manner the Government desire. If the feeling is, as we know it is, unanimous against the Government proposal, then it is not too much to ask that regard shall be had to our view, and that one more concession shall be made in the so-called sentimental direction, upon the principle that has already conceded exclusive legislation for Wales. Whatever may have induced the right hon. Gentleman to conceive that this measure was introduced in the interest of temperance, his views in this direction must have been considerably shaken, and however excusable may have been their introduction of this Bill into Parliament, he can no longer, if he has eyes to see and ears to hear, plead any sufficient excuse for continuing to press them on an unwilling country. The principle of separate treatment for Wales has already been conceded, and particularly in regard to the liquor traffic. The assertions that Welsh opinion did not desire a continuance of the Sunday Closing legislation were completely exploded by the evidence laid before the Commissioners. The distinct and separate treatment of Wales in that matter has been completety justified, and there is every reason for carrying the exemption to the point indicated by the Amendment.

*(11.35.) Mr. G. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.): The right hon. Gentleman opposes the Amendment on two grounds. The first is the technical objection that the question raised is *res judicata*, and this is disposed of by the ruling of the Chair. As to the second objection that the Amendment amounts to a setting up of a National Council for Wales, I frankly say that that is a reason upon which I support the Amendment. If ever there was a question upon which I may say the unanimous opinion of the Principality has been expressed it is this: The right hon. Gentleman talks of the pollution of rivers; but this is a question of the moral pollution of the whole country by the drink traffic. Welsh opinion, I say, is practically unanimous. I have looked through the Division List upon the Amendment of the hon. Member for Rotherham, and I find only two Welsh Members voted against it. We are entitled to distinctive treatment; there is precedent for it in the Sunday Closing Bill. The Government systematically disregard the wishes of a whole nation, insisting upon giving us what we do not want, and withholding what we want. With or without this Amendment, I venture to say there is not a County Council in Wales will touch this money for the purpose the Government propose; it will simply accumulate. The Government are trying to drive this Bill through the House by dwindling majorities; is it wise in the face of the expression of an unanimous opinion of the Welsh people to force this legislation down our throats? I do not think the Division List will show any Welsh Member supporting the Government on this occasion.

*(11.37.) Mr. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvon, Eifion): There is no part of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board with which I can agree, but there was one portion of the speech which struck me with surprise and amuse-

ment. I had always thought it especially the duty of Members on the Ministerial side and of Members on that Front Bench to support the decision of the Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

*MR. BRYN ROBERTS: Well, Sir, I will simply say that no argument is needed to meet the first point of objection raised by the right hon. Gentleman, namely, that this Amendment amounts to a revision of a Division already arrived at, inasmuch as you, Sir, have ruled the Amendment in order. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say that the setting up of such a council was never contemplated by the statute passed in 1888. But I apprehend what was contemplated must be gathered from the statute itself. I do not find that the objects are specified for which the council is set up. If this is not an administrative question that is common to all the Welsh counties I would like to know what is. It relates to the application of money wnich has been voted for the benefit of particular localities, and it is as much an administrative question as the pollution of rivers. The right hon. Gentleman has not attempted to meet any of the arguments advanced from this side in favour of the Amendment. He has not questioned, or referred to, the universality of the feeling in Wales. Let the right hon. Gentleman consult his own Welsh supporters. Will any Welsh Conservative Member get up and support the application of this money as proposed by this Government? Let him take the feeling of the Conservative Party in Wales. He may choose to disregard the views of the Radical and Liberal Party, but let him take any section in the Principality—excluding the publicans, who are pecuniarily interested—and he will find them in favour of such an Amendment as this. Indeed, I do not think a single Welsh Conservative Member can be found who will support the Government proposal. Intermediate education, I may remind the Committee, is not the only alternative object to which the money could be devoted. The Amendment does not define the alternative, but simply authorises such purposes as may be agreed upon by the Joint Committee of the County Councils of Wales and Monmouthshire. It is a safe and a truly Conservative proposal. In his own county of Carnarvonshire, and in Anglesea, there is a strong feeling as to the heavy burden which the abolition of turnpikes threw upon the County Councils, and the money might be applied to lessen the weight of that burden. With respect to the necessities of Wales in the matter of education. Some counties, Denbighshire and Monmouthshire, have very liberal endowment, and would not have much necessity to resort to the powers proposed to be conferred by this Amendment, in order to eke out the funds of the County Committees under the Education Act; such counties would by this Amendment be enabled to apply some of the money not there needed for Intermediate Education towards the relief of the heavy burden of the maintenance of roads. The Government admitted this burden, and the necessity of relief, by introducing the Van and Wheel Tax; but other counties suffer greatly from the insufficiency of funds, and this Amendment would remove the grievance. I would urge on the Government that they will gain considerable credit by accepting this Amendment. There can be little doubt that the chief desire of every Conservative Member on the Benches opposite is to get out of the difficulty created by this Bill without discredit to the Government. The general feeling on both sides of the House is that this Bill has been a mistake; but by adopting the Amendment the Government will derive some credit from it, and at the same time confer a benefit on the people of Wales. No injury will be done to anyone by the adoption of the Amendment. Certainly the publican will not be injured. Not a single County Council in Wales will touch the money for the purpose intended by the Bill, and the publican will not be injured by its application to other objects.

Mr. RITCHIE rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

(11.50.) The Committee divided :—Ayes 251 ; Noes 205.—(Div. List, No. 139.)

Question put accordingly, "That those words be there inserted."

(12.10.) The Committee divided :—Ayes 204 ; Noes 249.—(Div. List, No. 140.)

It being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

ANGLESEY ASSIZES AND QUARTER SESSIONS BILL.—(No. 248.)

Bill, as amended, considered; Amendments made.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

TREES (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 70.)

Dr. TANNER: May I ask the hon. Member for South Antrim does he persist in his Amendment?

Mr. MACARTNEY: Yes; I regret to say I must do so.

Committee deferred till to-morrow.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) RATING BILL.
(No. 149.)

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

NEW LICENCES (IRELAND) BILL.
(No. 249.)

Order for Committee read.

Several hon. **Members**: I object.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I submit, as a matter of order, that the proper course for hon. Members who object is to move that Progress be reported.

***Mr. SPEAKER**: Order, order! It would be a mere farce for me to leave the Chair merely to walk back again.

Committee deferred till to-morrow.

POSTPONEMENT OF MOTION.

EAST INDIA (CIVIL SERVANTS.)

Mr. A. O'CONNOR: There is a Motion standing in the name of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir J. Gorst), as to the inquiry into the fall in the value of the rupee and the pensions of East India (Civil Servants.)

Mr. JACKSON: It is postponed.

Mr. A. O'CONNOR: This Motion is put on the Paper, and is passed over night after night without intimation.

Order postponed till Monday next.

MOTION.

REMOVAL TERMS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1886) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Mark Stewart, Bill to amend "The Removal Terms (Scotland) Act, 1886," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Mark Stewart, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Marjoribanks, and Mr. Thorburn.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 342.]

LOCAL TAXATION ACCOUNT, 1889-90.

Copy ordered—

"Of Return showing the total amount of the Local Taxation Licences and Probate Duty Grant paid into the Local Taxation Account in respect of the financial year ended the 31st day of March, 1890, and the amounts paid out of that Account to, or on behalf of, the Council of each Administrative County and County Borough, in respect of the same financial year." —(*Mr. Long.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 226.]

WEST INDIA MAIL CONTRACT.

Copy ordered—

"Of the Contract dated the 15th day of May, 1890, with the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company for the conveyance of Mails to the West Indies, together with a Copy of the Treasury Minute relating thereto."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 227.]

House adjourned at twenty minutes before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 17th June, 1890.

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF CLARENCE AND AVONDALE'S PLACE IN THIS HOUSE.

Committee for Privileges met. The matter with which the Marquess of Salisbury acquainted the House, by Her Majesty's command, relating to the place which His Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence and Avondale should occupy in this House, also the Statute of the 31st of King Henry the Eighth, for placing of the Lords, and also the entries in the Journals of this House of the 22nd and 24th of April, 1760, in the matter of the recommendation from His Majesty King George the Second, relating to His Majesty's grandson, His Royal Highness the Duke of York's place in this House, considered; and, a Resolution thereon being agreed to by the Committee, the said Resolution ordered to be reported to the House.

House adjourned during pleasure.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.

Report from, That the Committee have added the Lord President (*V. Cranbrook*) to the Standing Committee for General Bills for the consideration of the Custody of Children Bill, and the Protection of Children Bill, and have added the Earl of Selborne to the said Standing Committee for the consideration of the Custody of Children Bill, in the place of the Lord Chancellor, the Lord in charge of the Bill, now a member of the Committee, under Standing Order No. XLVII., and have added the Earl of Selborne to the said Standing Committee for the consideration of the Protection of Children Bill, in the place of the Lord Chaworth (*E. Meath*), the Lord in charge of the Bill, now a member of the Committee, under the said Standing Order; and the Committee have added the Earl of Kimberley to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c., for the consideration of the Offences Committed Abroad Bill; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF CLARENCE AND AVONDALE'S PLACE IN THIS HOUSE.

Report from the Committee for Privileges, that His Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence and Avondale has place and precedence in this House next after His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught and Strathearn, and before His Royal Highness the Duke of Albany, His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Chancellor or Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, the Archbishop of York, the Lord President of Her Majesty's Privy Council, the Lord Privy Seal, and all other Dukes, and that Her Majesty may direct His said Royal Highness to be placed in a chair or seat, to be prepared for him, on the left hand of the Cloth of Estate, if such shall be Her Royal pleasure; made, and agreed to; and resolved and adjudged accordingly; and Resolution and Judgment to be laid before Her Majesty by the Lords with White Staves: Ordered, that the proceedings of the Committee for Privileges be printed. (No. 124.)

TECHNICAL SCHOOLS ACT, 1889.

QUESTION—OBSERVATIONS.

LORD NORTON: My Lords, I beg to put a question to the noble Viscount the President of the Council. I have had a notice on the Paper for some time to move for a Return of what has been done under the Technical Schools Act of last Session. I beg to ask the noble Viscount whether that information can now be given?

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK): In reply to the question which has been asked by the noble Lord, I beg to point out that, as far as we are acquainted with it in the Science and Art Department, the information is contained in the Report just published. I think my noble Friend will find it at page 43.

BUILDINGS IN THE METROPOLIS—HANKEY MANSIONS.

QUESTION—OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT **HARDINGE**: My Lords, I wish to put a question to my noble Friend who answers for the Office of Works in this House. I assume that none of your Lordships are very much enamoured of a building, which we all know, and which generally goes by the name of the Hankey Mansions. To my mind, it is one of the most unsightly erections that this Metropolis can boast of. It is one of those eyesores that now meet one at every turn. The view from Buckingham Palace, walking south, is one of the best views in the Park, and even that view is marred, to a certain extent, by some high buildings erected in the rear of the War Office. There seems, really, my Lords, to be a sort of mania for building these very high houses. No doubt, they are very profitable speculations; but that is no reason, I think, why speculative builders should be allowed to spoil the appearance of the Metropolis. Then we have what are called the Albert Gate Mansions—those very high buildings which have been erected at Albert Gate. Let me tell your Lordships what took place with regard to that. Mr. Plunket, finding that these buildings might be run up to any enormous height, considered, I am told, that the only way he could prevent it was by theatening to build a wall in front of the windows. In that case, I believe, he succeeded to a certain extent, and they were stopped. Still, to my mind, they are even now of an inordinate height — quite an unnecessary height. Then there are the buildings at the corner of Piccadilly and Arlington street, which shut out light and air from many of the surrounding buildings. Again, as I have mentioned before, the buildings on the Thames Embankment are unnecessarily high; they dwarf all the public buildings and the Banqueting Hall adjacent. Then, my Lords, even if we design a War Office, it seems we cannot design it without having an enormous tower erected, which would dwarf all the buildings in Trafalgar Square. Now, I think, the time has arrived when something should be done in a legislative direction to stop these enormously high buildings. Since giving notice of this question I have been informed by the Secretary of the Open Spaces Committee that last year Mr. Whitmore, the Member for Chelsea, brought in a Bill to limit the height of these houses. That Bill, unfortunately from press of business and other causes, lapsed; but this year the same Association has induced the County Council to insert a clause in their General Powers Bill limiting the height in future of all street houses. The clause in the Bill is to the following effect:—

> "No building shall be erected of a greater height than 70 feet without the consent in writing of the Council."

And then the clause goes on to enact certain pains and penalties for violating that provision. I do not know whether this is a private or a public Bill, and I do not know what stage the Bill has reached in the other House of Parliament, but it strikes me very strongly that a question of this importance ought not to be dealt with in a private Bill. It is impossible to say what may be done with a private Bill when clauses have to be considered. I must express my humble opinion that upon such a question as this it would be much more satisfactory if the Government would take up the question and bring in a short Bill which would effect the desired object. I do not wish to dwell upon the clauses in this Bill, because it might be irregular, as the Bill is not before your Lordships' House; but, looking to the probability of the improvements in Great George Street and in other streets and the possibility of our having other similar buildings, I am anxious that some legislation should take place before another lot of Hankey Mansions be erected in this Metropolis. I hope my noble Friend will not look upon my question in an unfavourable light, but that he will give the House some sort of assurance that his Department will lend its aid to the promotion of what I think a very useful and necessary piece of legislation.

*LORD **HENNIKER**: My Lords, at the outset I will say that I warmly sympathise with my noble Friend the noble Viscount who has just sat down, in what he has said about these hideous buildings that are defacing London at the present moment; but, at the same time, I must tell him that the Office of Works has no power to deal with these high buildings. At present they have no more power to do so than any one of your Lordships or any member of the public who may pass down Birdcage Walk, near the building which the noble Viscount has described. Of course, that building is not very good-looking alongside the Wellington Barracks, but I may tell the noble Viscount and your Lordships that Wellington Barracks are not under the Office of Works at all. They are under the War Office, and, therefore, this particular building to which he has referred does not interfere with any building under the Office of Works. But, of course, my Lords, these high buildings do very much affect the Office of Works indirectly, because undoubtedly they do not improve the look of the Parks and the buildings which are under the control of the Office. My Lords, this is really a question for the County Council, as the noble Viscount has said; it is not a question for the Office of Works to deal with, or on which even to initiate legislation; but all I can say is this: that if by the wisdom of Parliament legislation is promoted and brought to an end in a satisfactory manner, there will be no one who will welcome the power to prevent the defacing with these buildings of London, the parks, and the buildings under the Office of Works, than the First Commissioner and those who act with him. I am sorry I can give the noble Viscount no other information, but I can assure him that if he can do anything to carry out what he wishes he will receive the warm support of the Office of Works.

FACTORS (SCOTLAND) (No. 2) BILL. (No. 108.)

Read 2ª (according to order), and committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

EDUCATION OF BLIND AND DEAF-MUTE CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL. (No. 123.)

Amendments reported (according to order); and Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next.

ANGLESEY ASSIZES AND QUARTER SESSIONS BILL.—(No. 125.)

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª, and to be printed.

KEW AND PETERSHAM VICARAGE BILL.—(No. 77.)

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 119.)

Reported from the Standing Committee for General Bills without Amendment; and re-committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 17th June, 1890.

QUESTIONS.

ADMIRALTY—UNDER-MANNING OF SHIPS.

Mr. COX (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether some of Her Majesty's ships of war are so undermanned in the Engineering Department that, in an engagement, it would be absolutely necessary to draft men from the guns to make up the deficiency, in order to secure the full steaming power of the engines?

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Lord G. Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing): No; such is not the case. The complement is amply sufficient to secure the full steaming power of the engines. If the maximum speed were maintained for a long period help might be required from deck hands to assist in trimming coal.

THE ROYAL NAVAL RESERVE.

Mr. ROUND (Essex, N.E., Harwich): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if he is aware of the growth of the maritime population in the towns and villages upon the River Colne; and whether he will provide some station in the locality where facilities could be granted for training for the Royal Navy or for entering the Royal Naval Reserve?

Lord G. HAMILTON: The Admiralty are making inquiries as to whether a suitable site for a drill battery can be obtained in the locality in question; and also as to the number of seafaring men who would probably avail themselves of the facilities for training that might be so afforded.

SEWERAGE WORKS FOR HARROW WEALD.

MR. COBB (Warwick, N.E., Rugby): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, referring to the promise which he gave to the hon. Member for the Rugby Division (Mr. Cobb) on the 20th of August last, and to the determination which he expressed in reply to the same hon. Member on the 18th of February last that something should be done as to the sewerage works for Harrow Weald, he can now state whether there is any probability of anything being done; and, if so, when; and whether, if the delay is continued, he will direct some steps to be taken to compel the Hendon Rural Sanitary Authority to proceed to execute the works?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Since my reply to the hon. Member for the Rugby Division, I have repeatedly pressed the Sanitary Authority with reference to the provision of the sewerage works for Harrow Weald. I am glad to be able to state that the Sanitary Authority have now succeeded in their negotiations for the purchase of eight acres of land for purposes of sewage disposal, and that they have applied for sanction to a loan of £3,500 in connection with the cost of purchase and the execution of the necessary works. It is requisite, however, that the Board should be furnished with plans of the works proposed, and I am informed that plans and sections will be laid before the authorities at their meeting to-day.

MR. COBB: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that plans were laid before the Local Authority 12 months ago?

MR. RITCHIE: I do not know whether that is so or not; but a loan is now being applied for in order that the works may be carried out.

RAILWAYS IN INDIA.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether he can state to the House the nature of, or whether he will lay Papers upon the Table showing

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the various proposals made during the past 12 months, to or by the Secretary of State in Council, and to or by the Government of India, and to either, by any other persons in relation to particular railways in India, or in relation to any general scheme of Indian Railway finance, together with any correspondence thereon?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): My noble Friend the Secretary of State is of opinion that it is not expedient to give the Papers asked for in the question, nor would it be convenient or practicable to do so. He wishes me to suggest to the hon. Gentleman that he will have an opportunity of discussing the matter on the statement in connection with the Indian Budget.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to give notice to the right hon. Gentleman that if he does not lay these Papers on the Table before the discussion of the Indian Budget takes place I shall feel it my duty to submit to the House a summary of the proposals made to the Government, with the criticisms of the Government of India upon them.

RAJAH BROOKE.

MR. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if it is a fact that Rajah Brooke has seized a large part of the Independent State of Brunei, against the wishes of the lawful Sovereign of the State; and, if so, has Rajah Brooke broken the agreement made between the Sultan of Brunei and Her Majesty's Government, also his own agreement with the Sultan; whether Her Majesty's Government has received a strong protest from the Sultan of Brunei, informing them that Rajah Brooke has interfered with the independence of the State of Brunei, and thereby violated the terms of the agreement between Her Majesty's Government and His Highness, dated 17th September, 1888; and if Her Majesty's Government will take steps to insure that their Treaty with the Sultan shall be respected, and if they will award compensation for any losses suffered by the Sultan in any breach of such Treaty?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): Rajah Brooke has annexed the Limbang District, which was nominally under the Sovereignty of the Sultan of Brunei, though his authority over it does not appear to have been recognised by the inhabitants for some years. The annexation is subject to the approval of Her Majesty's Government. The Sultan of Brunei has protested. We are not yet in possession of sufficient information to enable me to make any statement as to the course which Her Majesty's Government may feel bound to take in the matter.

FISHING IN THE LOWER HOPE.

MR. BAZLEY-WHITE (Gravesend): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has received a Memorial from the fishermen of Gravesend, praying that boats from Greenwich and Blackwall may be prevented from fishing in the Lower Hope with illegal nets, called "stobard nets," by which the fry and spawn of all kinds of fish are destroyed, and the livelihood of the fishermen taken away; also that sewerage matter may be prevented from being brought down the river and deposited at the entrance by the steamships *Barking* and *Bazalgette*, whereby great harm is done to the fishing; and whether the Board of Trade will take such steps as may be necessary to remove the nuisance complained of?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I have received the Memorial to which the hon. Member refers, in which complaint is made of the use of stow boat nets, and the deposit of sewage in a part of the River Thames which is under the jurisdiction of the Thames Conservancy. A copy of the Memorial was forwarded to the Conservators, who have replied that instructions have been given to their Harbour Master to carefully watch and report all cases of a breach of their bye-laws.

TREATMENT OF PRISONERS IN MOROCCO.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will cause our Minister in Morocco, Sir W. Kirby Green, to make representations to the Sultan in order to alleviate the alleged ill-treatment of the prisoners confined in the prisons at Tangiers and Tetnan?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The attention of Her Majesty's Minister has been already called to the subject, and he has authority to make representations respecting the state of the prisons to the Moorish Government whenever he sees any prospect of doing so with success. I regret to say that, according to his latest Report on the question, he had found that diplomatic representations were ineffectual to abate the evils complained of.

FLASH SIGNALS—ADMIRAL COLOMB'S INVENTION.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he will lay upon the Table of the House Copies of all letters, agreements, and receipts given by Admiral Colomb, relating to his invention of the Flash Signals?

LORD G. HAMILTON: As the question of this officer's services in the introduction into the Navy of the system of flashing signals is still under consideration, it would be inexpedient to present to Parliament at the present time any Papers on the subject.

EGYPTIAN LOAN.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will ascertain from the Financial Adviser of the Egyptian Government the amount of commission paid to Messrs. Rothschild and Sons for issuing the new Egyptian 3½ per Cent. Loan?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: This is a matter entirely within the discretion of the Egyptian Government.

MORELL'S CHARITY.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for the Penrith Division of Cumberland (Mr. J. W. Lowther) whether the Charity Commissioners have, since the date of the Report of the Royal Commission on the City Livery Companies, in 1884, dealt with Morell's Charity of the Goldsmiths' Company; and, if so, in what way, both generally and with special reference to 30 acres of land at Barking, part of the corpus of the Charity?

*Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): The Charity Commissioners are taking proceedings for the establishment of a new scheme. The scheme does not deal with the land at Barking.

CIVIL ESTABLISHMENTS.

Mr. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the great inconvenience which is occasioned in the several Public Departments by the existence of vacancies in the staff, and the stagnation of promotion which has occurred since the appointment of the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments, the Treasury will expedite the settlement of the various establishment questions now under their consideration, and sanction the promotion of those clerks of the Second Division who have already been recommended by the Heads of their Departments under the new Regulations set forth in the recent Treasury Minutes and the Order in Council?

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square): The Treasury has been busily engaged upon these questions, and material progress has been made towards their settlement. But the reduction of various establishments to a fixed cadre, in accordance with the recommendations of the Royal Commission, is a matter concerning which a great variety of opinions may be legitimately expressed, and which demands the most careful adjustment. The promotion of Second Division clerks to the upper class in that Division and to staff posts, must necessarily depend on the schemes adopted for the entire Departments, as it is these schemes which will determine the classification and distribution of the work.

THE LADIES' GALLERY.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works what is the height from ground floor of the House to the Committee Rooms and the Ladies Gallery, and would it be possible to put up a lift or lifts for the convenience of Members and of ladies visiting the House?

*The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Plunket, Dublin University): I find that the height of this building, from the ground floor to the Committee Rooms, is 39ft. 3in. It would be possible to introduce into the staircase leading to the Ladies' Gallery a small lift to contain three people, but it would be an expensive undertaking.

Sir G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): Is there not already a lift for coals, and could not the ladies be substituted for coals?

*Mr. PLUNKET: Such a lift does exist, and it certainly could be used either for the ladies or the coals; but I think it would be very difficult to combine the two. I can give no undertaking at present.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: During the recess will the right hon. Gentleman inquire into the matter?

*Mr. PLUNKET: I have no objection to do that.

Mr. LENG (Dundee): Has the right hon. Gentleman obtained any estimate of the cost?

*Mr. PLUNKET: No, Sir.

THE CORPORATION OF NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can fix an early date for the holding of the promised inquiry into the way in which the Corporation of Newcastle-under-Lyme have expended the proceeds of a loan of £23,624, originally borrowed for certain specific purposes, several of which have not been carried out; whether, when an urban Sanitary Authority borrows money under the sanction of the Local Government Board, that Board has any control which will enable it to secure that the money is expended for the purposes for which it is borrowed; and whether such authorities are under statutory or other obligation to publish to the ratepayers any accounts which will show how the proceeds of loans are expended and from time to time otherwise dealt with?

Mr. RITCHIE: The Local Government Board have received a communication from one of the Councillors of the Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme, in which it is alleged that certain monies which have been raised under the sanction of the Board have not been wholly applied to the purposes for which the loan was sanctioned. The Board have forwarded a copy of the communication as regards these allegations to the Town

Council, but have not yet received their reply. The Board have been informed of a further proposal of the Town Council to borrow. No sanction to a further loan will be given without a local inquiry, and at that inquiry the question as to the appropriation of the proposed loan will be considered. In the case of Local Boards and other authorities, whose accounts are subject to the audit of the District Auditors, it would be the duty of the Auditor to satisfy himself that monies borrowed for a particular purpose are applied to that purpose. In the case, however, of a Municipal Corporation the accounts are not audited by the Auditors appointed by the Board. Under Section 233 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, the Treasurer's accounts are open to the inspection of the Council, and an abstract of these accounts is to be open to the inspection of all the ratepayers of the borough, and copies thereof are to be delivered to ratepayers on payment of a reasonable price. These provisions are made applicable to the accounts of a Town Council acting as an Urban Authority by Section 246 of the Public Health Act.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: Am I to understand that an inquiry will be made if the right hon. Gentleman is not satisfied in regard to the manner in which the money has been expended?

Mr. RITCHIE: The inquiry I have spoken of would be an inquiry as to the circumstances connected with a further application for a loan. In regard to all applications for power to raise money by loan an inquiry is held; but I have pointed out that the Local Government Board have no power to appoint Auditors. They do not possess the same control over the expenditure of money in the case of Corporations as they do in the case of Local Boards.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: If the application for a further loan is not persisted in have the Local Government Board no authority to inquire as to the expenditure of the money already borrowed?

Mr. RITCHIE: No, Sir; we have no authority; none.

WAR OFFICE CONTRACTS—BAYONETS.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary for War what contracts and for what total number of bayonets have been made with Messrs. Wilkinson, and what number of bayonets have been delivered under such contracts; whether, subsequent to the respective contracts or any of them being originally made, any alterations were made in the shape of the bayonets or the test to which they were to be submitted; and whether the short bayonets or knives now being used with the new magazine rifle are those for which the first contract was given to Messrs. Wilkinson?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY for WAR (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): Only one contract has been made with Messrs. Wilkinson for bayonets, namely, for 150,000. Originally they were to have been of the pattern known as the Enfield Martini, 1877, and to a specification dated September, 1888; 42,000 were made under this order. In September, 1889, it was decided that the remaining 108,000 should be made of the 1888 pattern, and to a revised specification, which was sent to the contractors on November 11, 1889. These are the short bayonets used with the magazine rifle, for which the test naturally differs from that of the longer weapon of the 1887 pattern. Consequently, the bayonets ordered in 1889 are not those for which the original contract was made.

Mr. HANBURY: In the new contract was the price altered?

Mr. BRODRICK: I believe there was some alteration in the price.

THE METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Mr. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Chief Commissioner of Metropolitan Police submitted an estimate of £138 for gratuities to the police who performed extra duty, and the Secretary of State granted £100 only, and, in consequence, the allowances have had to be reduced below the usual scale; and, if so, will he say why the usual course has not been followed?

Mr. G. BRUCE (Finsbury, Holborn) also asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the Police Order quoted in the *Daily Telegraph*, of Saturday last, relating to the grant of refreshment allowances or gratuities to the officers and men of the Metropolitan Police Force; whether it is the fact that the police have been deprived of the usual refreshment allowance to which they are entitled under the Rules; what is the Rule governing the grant of refreshment allowances, and was the claim, in respect of which the £100 (mentioned in the Order) was given, made under that Rule; have any other payments of that character been made; and whether any steps have been taken to mitigate the pressure of exceptional work falling upon officers and men of the Police Force?

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster): I have also to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the grants of refreshment allowances or gratuities to the Metropolitan Police for extra service in times of emergency, whether the sum of £138 represented the allowances, calculated on the usual scale for the extra work done by the police during the recent gas and dock strikes; whether that sum was reduced to £100; whether he is aware that this reduction has caused great discontent amongst the men, and whether he will explain his reasons for the reduction?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I will answer the questions of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Pickersgill), and my hon. Friends the Members for Westminster (Mr. Burdett-Coutts), and Holborn (Mr. G. Bruce), numbered 26 and 28, at the same time. Refreshment allowances are governed by the Regulations of the Police Force, and are allowances for expenses incurred, subject to two conditions, namely, that a man has been on duty over nine hours continuously, and that he was on duty too far from his home or Division to return for meals. This refreshment allowance has never been refused, and has never been reduced in any case which comes within the Rules. Last September the Commissioner asked that the refreshment allowance should be granted to men who were not entitled to it, because they had not fulfilled the conditions laid down in the Rules, but who had done extra duty or had suffered loss of leave in connection with meetings in Hyde Park, and these demands were made on several occasions. They involved the principle that the police had an equitable right to be paid for loss of leave or for overtime beyond their usual spell of eight hours' duty. This principle has not hitherto been admitted in the administration of the police. It appears to me contrary to the terms on which the police are employed. It carries with it the consequence of payment for all overtime beyond an eight hours' day. I did not feel justified in allowing this novel claim. But whilst I declined to grant a refreshment allowance, which had not been earned, I awarded in recognition of the zeal and good services of the police a round sum of £100, to be distributed by the Commissioner at his discretion among those men who had been most inconvenienced by extra work or loss of leave. The Commissioner asked that this gratuity might be increased to £138, on the ground that £138 would enable him to grant the refreshment allowance, which I had just declined to allow as unsound in principle, and contrary to the Rules. I had had no previous estimate of this amount. I declined this application. This was in February last. No distribution of the £100 gratuity was made till the 13th inst.; and the distribution, contrary to my intention, is not on the basis of rewards for exceptional hardship, but on the basis of a reduced refreshment allowance. It is very possible that discontent has been caused by the manner in which this gift has been distributed. On May 28, I awarded another gratuity of £200 for extra work done by the police on other occasions when the refreshment allowance had not been earned. Altogether, I have distributed in gratuities of this kind, beyond and outside the Rules governing refreshment allowances, over £900 since July last. I also, in December last, sanctioned the substantial increase of 1,000 men to the Police Force, largely with the view of mitigating the pressure of exceptional work falling upon officers and men, and my desire has always been to treat the Force with consideration and liberality, and to recognise, so far as I could, the zeal and devotion displayed by the Metropolitan Police of all ranks.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): How many of the 1,000 men have been already added?

*MR. MATTHEWS: If I am to answer the question with perfect accuracy I must ask for notice. The increase was sanctioned in December last, and is to be made at the rate of 100 men a month.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is that the increase which was sanctioned by the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt)?

*MR. MATTHEWS: No; it was sanctioned by me in December last.

MR. E. HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to confer with the Chief Secretary in order to see how English money is spent upon the police in Ireland.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): When will the question of the addition to the Police Force, and the consequent provision of expense, be brought before the House?

*MR. MATTHEWS: I am afraid I must ask for notice of that question. It will not be in the Vote this year.

MR. STUART: Am I to understand that this House has no voice as to the number of the police?

MR. MATTHEWS: All I intended to say was that no Vote of the House will be asked for in order to meet the expense.

MR. JAMES STUART: Then how is the expense to be met?

MR. MATTHEWS: Out of the income of the Metropolitan Police Fund.

MR. JAMES STUART: Is it not the case that the income of the Metropolitan Police Fund was not too much in the past year; and how is it to be made sufficient to meet the necessities of more policemen?

MR. MATTHEWS: On the Police Vote the fullest explanation will be given to the House.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): Do I understand the Secretary of State to say that no Vote is going to be taken this year in the Estimates for the sum which is to be paid out of public money for the Metropolitan Police?

MR. MATTHEWS: Certainly.

MR. J. ROWLANDS: Is it intended to bring forward the Police Vote at such a time that the House may have an opportunity of discussing it?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): The Police Vote will be brought forward on an early day.

MR. PICKERSGILL: May I ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, before the Second Reading of the Police Bill is taken, he would publish the fixed scale (within the meaning of Clause 3) which he proposed to adopt for ordinary pensions in the Metropolitan Police Force.

MR. MATTHEWS: Publication of the scale at the present time would be premature. It is enough for me to say that it is my intention, if the Bill passes in its present shape, to adopt the maximum scale in the schedule as the scale for ordinary pensions in the Metropolitan Police Force, and not to prescribe any limit of age as a qualification of the right to claim pension after 25 years' service.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL.

CAPTAIN PRICE (Devonport): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty when the Greenwich Hospital Accounts will be in the hands of Members; and whether any opportunity will be afforded for their discussion?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: On the 20th June. The usual facilities in discussing Estimates will be offered.

SHEERNESS DOCKS.

MR. H. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether steps are being taken, or will be taken, to enlarge the docks at Sheerness, so as to obviate the necessity for large ships having to go to Chatham?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: The Admiralty are at the present time considering a suggestion to lengthen one of the docks at Sheerness for accommodating vessels of a certain class, as it is proposed by the present Board of Admiralty to build vessels of a larger size at Sheerness than have hitherto been constructed there.

CONSTITUTION HILL.

CAPTAIN VERNEY (Bucks, N.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether, in view of the experience gained of the traffic on Constitution Hill during the height of the season, this road can now be thrown open to cyclists?

MR. PLUNKET: I have not received any official Report on the subject; but it seems to me that the volume of traffic on Constitution Hill is steadily increasing.

THE SCIENCE AND ART DEPARTMENT.

MR. J. WILSON (Lanark, Govan): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether a Circular has been issued by the Science and Art Department, to the effect that in future no pupil on the register of an elementary school can be examined in science by that Department; whether he is aware that several School Boards in Scotland have, on the strength of encouragement held out to them by the Department, incurred considerable expense in providing laboratories and apparatus, as well as teaching power, all of which will, under the new conditions imposed by the Circular referred to, be rendered useless; and whether, in the circumstances, the Department will withdraw the conditions imposed by the said Circular so far, at least, as it refers to Scotland?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): May I ask whether the Minute in question will apply equally to Board Schools in England?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): The Circular in question was issued to check the duplication of payments caused by the overlapping of the functions of the Education Departments in the three Kingdoms and the operations of the Science and Art Department; but representations having been made to me that paragraph 2 of the Circular will have a detrimental effect upon science instruction in many schools, I am considering the possibility of substituting for the rule there laid down some regulation which, without being open to the same exception, will promote the object we have in view.

DR. KENNY (Cork, S.): Will a similar Rule apply to Ireland?

SIR W. HART DYKE: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to be good enough to put the question down.

THE POST OFFICE SERVANTS.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether the East Central letters of the French Mail, which arrived on Saturday night at 6.40, and should have gone out by the 8.15 delivery the same night, were still in the office on Sunday night; whether the block in the East Central Office on Saturday night was as great as is usually the case at Christmas time; and what is the cause of such unusual pressure? I have to ask, further, whether it has been reported to him that on Friday last, on the Western District, postmen who should have finished their delivery at 4.20, and be on duty again at 5.20, only finished their delivery at 5.40, and were then deprived of their usual time allowance for tea; whether such delay was caused by the non-arrival in due time of the district bags from the Central Office; and what was the cause of such delay; whether it is the case that a large quantity of circulars which were received at the General Post Office on the 13th instant were not despatched till 10 a.m. on Monday the 16th instant; whether, in consequence, the usual 10.20 a.m. delivery was delayed fully half-an-hour; whether a special staff was asked to work on all through Saturday night; and whether, in the ordinary course, such circulars would have gone out on Saturday morning? I have also to ask how much has been expended at the E.C. and W. District Post Offices in payment for extra duty caused by the suspension of postmen at those offices for attending a Trade Union meeting on the 16th May; and why the letters by the Dutch mail arriving at 8.15 a.m. on Saturday and Monday were not delivered until between 11.30 and 12.45; whether this was two hours beyond the usual and proper time; and whether he can take steps to prevent this delay, which causes great inconvenience to business men in the City?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University): To questions Nos. 29, 30, 31, and 33 the answer is, in each case, There is no foundation for the statements suggested. To question 32 the answer is £5 6s. 6d.

MR. CONYBEARE: The answer of the right hon. Gentleman is the same which he gave me two or three days ago. I should like to ask him on what authority he makes the statement that there is no foundation whatever for these allegations? I can only say that the information has been supplied to me on the very highest authority.

*MR. RAIKES: I have made the statement on the best official information I could obtain at the Post Office.

MR. CONYBEARE: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will state the number of postmen who had a part of their wages forfeited for attending a Trade Union meeting on 16th May, the ordinary weekly wage of the men, and the total amount forfeited?

*MR. RAIKES: Thirty one; but three having given satisfactory assurances for their good behaviour, the punishment in their case has been remitted. The wages of the men ranged from 18s. to 32s. The total amount forfeited cannot be stated at present or until it be known how many of the men, besides those who have already done so, are prepared to give satisfactory assurances for their good behaviour.

MR. CONYBEARE: Will the right hon. Gentleman state what are the satisfactory assurances these men have given?

*MR. RAIKES: They have given their word, which I regard as a satisfactory assurance.

MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): Do the Regulations apply to the superior officers as well as the working men?

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he will state whether the persons he sent to obtain, or from whom he did obtain, the names and numbers of the men who attended the meeting on Clerkenwell Green on 16th May, have reported some men as being at that meeting who were not there; and whether the officers who performed this work were the ordinary overseers or assistant overseers, or whether they were from the Confidential or Criminal Investigation Department?

*MR. RAIKES: It is the fact that some of the men who were reported as being at the meeting on Clerkenwell Green on the 16th May have stated that they were not there, or that they happened to be passing on their way without any intention of attending the meeting. In all such cases the assurances of the men have been accepted. The officers employed were of various grades, and did not belong to the Confidential Inquiry Branch.

MR. C. GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether Mr. Raynor, assistant or second class overseer, and Mr. Birch, foreman porter, at the Western District Post Office, were sent to Cavendish Square on 16th May to take the names and numbers of the postmen who assembled there for a Trades Union procession; whether these gentlemen went on their own responsibility; and, in either case, whether their information was made use of; whether, in consequence, Mr. Raynor lost all control over his subordinates, and had to be removed to a new position; and whether such officials will be so employed in future?

*MR. RAIKES: I have to say that the officers employed on this occasion acted under the instructions of their official superiors. It would therefore serve no useful purpose to mention the names of individuals so employed. Mr. Raynor has been removed to a fresh duty, but not in consequence of his having lost control over his sudordinates. For the future the same or some other Post Office servants will be similarly employed as occasion may require.

MR. C. GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware that in 1882 a meeting of postmen, including delegates from country postmen, was held in the Memorial Hall, to which the public were admitted, at which a Member of Parliament and several postmen made speeches; and whether postmen were punished for attending or speaking at such meeting?

*MR. RAIKES: I am not aware of the circumstance to which the hon. Member refers, and the shortness of the notice has not admitted of my making inquiry.

MR. C. GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he has taken any steps to ascertain the objects and methods of organisation and action of the Postmen's Union; whether he will communicate the result to the House; and whether, if he should be satisfied that it does fully represent the postmen, and that they wish matters affecting their wages, hours of labour, &c., to be negotiated between the Department and their Trade Union officials, he will take steps to give effect to their wishes?

*MR. RAIKES: No, Sir. I must absolutely decline to discuss matters affecting the postmen, except with the postmen themselves.

MR. C. GRAHAM: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that he declines to treat with anyone but the postmen themselves? Is the Secretary to the Postmen's Union to be excluded from discussions as to the interests of the men?

*MR. RAIKES: The postmen are perfectly well aware that the person described as the Secretary to the Postmen's Union is not, and never has been, a Post Office servant; and it is the universal rule that matters relating to persons engaged in the Service can only be discussed between them and their superior officers.

MR. C. GRAHAM: Do these men, on becoming postmen, forfeit their right to join a Trades Union; and has the right hon. Gentleman any right to subject them to *quasi*-military discipline?

MR. STOREY (Sunderland): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the ancient contention of the employers of this country was that they alone should settle any disputes with their workmen, without the interposition of the Secretary of a Trades Union? There were continual conflicts in consequence; but since the employers of labour have taken the more common-sense plan of discussing these matters with the Secretary of the Union there has been much peace. May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will not take the advantage of the experience gained by the employers of labour, and adopt the same plan in his Department?

*MR. RAIKES: I must point out that I have only endeavoured to carry out the Regulations of my Department, which, I may add, have been considerably relaxed for the benefit of the men. In regard to the question of the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey), the most recent experience indicates, I think, the advisability of maintaining a firm and resolute attitude.

MR. C. GRAHAM: I wish to have a decided answer in the affirmative or negative as to whether these men are prohibited from joining a Trade Union, or whether they are not?

*MR. RAIKES: I can only say, again, that the men are quite free to form or join Associations for their mutual benefit and mutual consideration of matters affecting their *status;* but it is impossible for the Department to recognise any combination which attempts to dictate to it on matters relating to its administration.

MALTESE MARRIAGES.

MR. SUMMERS (Huddersfield): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is a fact, as stated by Lord Salisbury—

> "That mixed marriages in Malta, where one party is a Roman Catholic and the other is not, remain in the same position which they have previously held, and are not in any way affected;"

and whether the Governor of Malta will, in accordance with the practice which has been in existence for many years, continue to issue licences to Protestant ministers authorising them to celebrate such marriages?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Yes. It is not intended to alter the law regulating mixed marriages in Malta. I cannot say, positively, within what limits it has been the practice of the Governor of Malta to issue licences authorising Protestant ministers to celebrate marriages. Further inquiry will be made as to this. But our intention is that Protestants shall not be placed, in any respect, in a worse position.

MR. T. M. HEALY: What does Sir Lintorn Simmonds want at Rome? Who asked him to be sent there? Was it the Maltese people?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: He went there in order to settle some matters affecting the welfare of the people of Malta. Of course, he was sent by the responsible Government.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Did the Catholics of Malta ask that he should be sent to Rome?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Not that I am aware of.

IRISH LIGHT RAILWAYS—MAYO AND DONEGAL.

MR. CRILLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if any decision has as yet been come to by the Treasury as to what line or lines of light railways are to be constructed in Mayo under the Light Railways Act of last year?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson, Leeds, N.): Negotiations are going on, and I hope that a satisfactory arrangement may be arrived at.

Mr. CRILLY: Seeing that the chief aim of these schemes was to give employment to the people of the district, and that the spring crops are now cut down, and the people will have nothing to do until harvest time, will the Government endeavour to overcome this unaccountable delay in making these lines? Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the Mr. Barton, whose line in Donegal is being pushed forward, is the same Mr. Barton who reported upon the line to Belmullet, and why should his schemes be favoured while nothing for Mayo is being favoured?

Mr. JACKSON: It is obvious that the hon. Member ought to give notice of a question of that kind, containing as it does allegations in which I do not agree.

THE TIPPERARY AND CASHEL MEETINGS.

Mr. LEAKE (Lancashire, S.E., Radcliffe): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is true that large bodies of constabulary assaulted with bâtons and chased the people of Tipperary Town on Sunday 25th May, without previously giving them authoritative notice to disperse, and although no resistance was offered or attempted; whether it is true that on the same day Colonel Cadell, R.M., referring to Father Humphreys and the honourable Members for East Mayo, East Tipperary, Mid Tipperary, South Galway, and South Louth, who were conferring together, gave the orders to the police: "Men, draw your bâtons," and "Charge, and clear these fellows out;" whether it is true that similar assaults on the inhabitants, many of whom were women, were committed in Boherlahan village in the presence of Mr. Bruan, R.M., and at Cashel, in the jurisdiction of Mr. Shannon, R.M., and in both cases without any preliminary request to disperse being made by the proper authority; whether it is true that on Mr. Bruan entering Cashel at the head of a body of military and police, he was publicly addressed by Mr. Shannon in the words, "Bravo, Bruan! we have bâtoned them like hell in Cashel to-day," and whether he will consider the advisability of separating the magisterial from the police functions of the Resident Magistrates in Ireland?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): I am informed the people were not dispersed without previous warning. With regard to Mr. Bruen, previous notification was given. The statement as to Colonel Caddell that gentleman completely denies. Mr. Shannon likewise denies that he used the language attributed to him. I quite agree with the last part of the question, and I shall take care that arrangements are made even more effective than those now existing.

*Mr. LEAKE: Are we to understand that the right hon. Gentleman takes the denial of the Magistrates mentioned, rather than the statements made by eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses, and by hon. Members in their place in this House?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Those Magistrates were eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses of the facts.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Will evidence on oath be received if tendered; or does the right hon. Gentleman prefer to take the simple word of Magistrates who are themselves incriminated?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I should like to know the circumstances under which the evidence on oath would be tendered.

Mr. GILL (Louth, S.): Five hon. Members agree in making a statement. Does the right hon. Gentleman not consider that sufficient for an inquiry?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir. The grounds for an inquiry on oath are not so simple as the hon. Member seems to imagine. I am strictly following precedent.

Mr. GILL: Is the word of Colonel Cadell to be taken in preference to the word of five hon. Members?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Colonel Caddell is a man in every way worthy of credence.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): If four or five affidavits are laid before the Government, will the right hon. Gentleman order an inquiry on oath?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no power to order an inquiry on oath.

Mr. SEXTON: Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that the Constabulary Code provides for an inquiry?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: For a Departmental Inquiry. If sufficient evidence is placed before me which, in my opinion, justifies a Departmental Inquiry, that may be held; but I will give no antecedent promise on the subject until I see the nature of the evidence.

*Mr. LEAKE: Is the House to understand that the very explicit words alleged to have been used by Mr. Shannon are due to the imagination of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon).

Mr. GILL: Does the Chief Secretary consider the words of five Members of this House worthy of the same credence as the words of Colonel Cadell. Does the right hon. Gentleman desire to imply that they are not worthy of consideration?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; I do not.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Is it customary for Resident Magistrates to exercise judicial as well as executive functions?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It is perfectly true that any Resident Magistrate may be called upon to exercise judicial as well as executive functions; but he does not exercise a judical function in regard to the same services and transactions as he exercises an executive function. The two functions are divided.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Does the right hon. Gentleman call a baton charge an executive function?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Certainly, Sir.

IRISH PRISON WARDERS.

Mr. CONYBEARE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what is the number of warders that constitutes a complete staff in each of the three classes into which the ordinary prisons of Ireland are divided; whether the staff in all classes have to do the same duty, and observe the same hours; what is the average number of hours per week each warder in each class of prison has to work; how often has a warder in each class to do night duty per month; how many holidays or half-holidays (exclusive of half-days before and after night duty) a warder gets in a month; is a warder ever entitled to a holiday except on the recommendation of the Governor; if the staff of a prison is reduced, owing to sickness or from any other cause, must the other warders in the prison do the duty of the absent warder or warders; do the warders performing such extra duty get any extra pay; and have old-service warders been deprived, by a Minute of the Treasury, of the pension they were entitled to as prevailing at the time they entered the Service?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The General Prisons Board report that the number of warders is not uniform in any class of prisons, but is regulated under Treasury sanction, according to the circumstances of each prison. The duties and hours of the staffs of the different prisons necessarily vary considerably according to circumstances. The average number of hours of actual duty per week may be taken to be about 82 in the larger prisons. In small prisons, where the staffs are limited, these hours are sometimes necessarily exceeded, but in these cases the general duties are of a much lighter character. In most prisons night duty is taken by each warder about three or four times in the month. In most prisons the warders get a half-holiday on every second Sunday and prison holiday. No holidays are granted, except on special application, but each warder is entitled to 14 days' annual leave. When the staff of a prison is temporarily reduced owing to the sickness of a warder or other cause, sometimes the other warders of the prison are required to do the duty of the absent warder; in other cases extra assistance is supplied, if possible, from another prison. There is no provision enabling the Board to give extra pay in such cases. The Board are not aware what Treasury Minute is referred to; but the Prisons Act of 1877 (section 27) provides that old prison officers shall hold their offices on like terms and tenure as before the Act.

Mr. CONYBEARE: Have not many warders refused the half-holidays because they had to wear uniform?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no such information.

Mr. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): Is it not the fact that before the right hon. Gentleman took office warders were allowed to spend their holidays out of uniform?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It may be so, but I have had nothing to do with it.

CHARGES OF RIOT AND ASSAULT AT PORTUMNA.

Mr. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the inquiry made by the Constabulary Authorities into the conduct of Constables O'Gowan and M'Grady, as disclosed in the evidence given in the dismissed cases of riot and assault brought by them against five men before two Resident Magistrates at Portumna, on 27th May last, whether he can now state the result of that investigation?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that the officers who inquired into the case find that the constables, while not drunk, had taken more intoxicating liquor on the occasion in question than men employed on responsible duty should indulge in. With regard to one of the constables, I am informed some further steps will be necessary before his case can be dealt with. The case of the other constable does not now arise in connection with this matter, as he is being discharged from the force in consequence of a serious breach of discipline, subsequently committed.

Mr. SEXTON: Has there been any finding upon the evidence given by the constables, which was found to be false?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have given the hon. Member all the information I possess.

Mr. MAC NEILL: Has it been found that the constable who said he discharged his gun in self-defence was justified in discharging his gun?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The case of one constable is still *sub judice*, and the other constable has been dismissed.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Is there any objection to prosecuting the constables for perjury, as they apparently perjured themselves in getting up the case against the five men?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The whole matter is under consideration.

"SHADOWING" BY THE IRISH POLICE.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what are the authorities or official persons who determine whether any individual is so notoriously engaged in boycotting or intimidation as to be rightly subject to shadowing by the police in Ireland; whether such authorities or official persons take any evidence before they order a man to be shadowed; whether the accused has any opportunity of defence; and is there any limit fixed to the period during which a man may be shadowed without being brought before a legal tribunal to be tried for the offence in which he is held to be notoriously engaged?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Divisional Commissioner or other Local Authority responsible for the carrying out of the law in the district directs the duty in question. The directions are given on information being forthcoming that the suspect is actively engaged in promoting illegal practices. It is not usual to inform the suspected person that he is being watched. To do so would render the obtaining of evidence with a view to prosecution more difficult. No limit of the nature mentioned in the last paragraph can be fixed, but, as I explained yesterday, the shadowing is at once stopped as soon as there is any ground for thinking it unnecessary.

Mr. PICTON: Does the right hon. Gentleman's answer apply to the new method of shadowing, by which one constable walks abreast of the shadowed man and another at his heels?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It applies to all shadowing in Ireland.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: On what authority can anyone connected with the police give directions which could not possibly be for the detection or prevention of crime?

Mr. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman see that a record of these orders for shadowing is kept, so that it may not be in the power of any constable to inflict this nuisance without leaving some trace of it behind?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: There is always some such record kept, I imagine. With regard to the question of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) the prevention and reduction of crime is the justification for this shadowing.

Mr. CONYBEARE: Will the right hon. Gentleman state on what authority, or upon what suspicion of crime, three ladies—namely, Lady Sandhurst, Miss Conybeare, and Miss Vivian—were shadowed by the police in Tipperary in the early days of July last year ?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. Member will give notice of that question I will make inquiries on the subject.

Dr. KENNY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that this system of shadowing has gone on to such an extent, and is of such an indiscriminate character, that two most respectable persons, who came from Manchester to Tipperary from mere motives of curiosity and to gain information, were also shadowed by the police to such an extent that that they were obliged to return to Dublin in disgust; and whether one of the persons shadowed was not connected with the right hon. Gentleman's Election Committee in Manchester ?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the hon. Gentleman has got an incorrect version of the facts; but I will, if he wishes me to do so, make further inquiry.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Has the right hon. Gentleman any statistics as to the number of persons shadowed, and the number of police employed in that service ?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I must have notice of the question.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Does the right hon. Gentleman not know the number?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course I do not know the number. I do not carry these statistics in my head.

Mr. GILL: With reference to the new method of shadowing—namely, walking side by side with the person shadowed, and another policeman following at his heels—I desire to ask the right hon. Gentleman what constitutes the superiority of that system over the old method ?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether any charge of boycotting or intimidation has been made against the Rev. David Macrae, a minister of religion at Dundee, who is at present travelling in Ireland for the benefit of his health; and on what grounds he was recently "shadowed" by the police while travelling from Newbridge to Clongorey ?

Mr. CAREW (Kildare, N.): I have also to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Rev. Mr. Macrae, of Dundee, and his wife, when visiting Clongorey on Thursday last, were shadowed by a policeman-man name Keating, who followed them from point to point on a bicycle, going everywhere the visitors went to; and whether he can say why they were so shadowed?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have asked for information, but have not yet obtained it. It is, therefore, necessary that I should ask for further time.

TENANTS OF TOWN PARKS IN IRELAND.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state under what provision of the Land Purchase (Ireland) Bill the tenants of town parks in Ireland are entitled to relief without the consent of the landlord; and whether he will introduce a clause to enable them to have fair rents fixed in respect of their holdings?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course, the purchase must be by mutual consent.

COLOUR BLINDNESS AMONG SAILORS.

Mr. WIGGIN (Staffordshire, Handsworth): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if the Committee who were appointed to investigate the subject of colour blindness amongst our Mercantile Marine have yet reported; and, if not, when they will be likely to do so; and if he could briefly state the mode adopted for testing?

*Sir M. HICKS BEACH: I conclude that the hon. Member refers to the Committee of the Royal Society, which is investigating this subject. The Committee was only appointed in March, and I have not yet heard when it is likely to make its Report.

LITERATURE FOR IRISH PAUPERS.

Mr. MAC NEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Boards of Guardians in Ireland are empowered, as similar Bodies are in England, to defray out of the rates the cost of supplying the inmates of workhouses with newspapers, periodicals, and books; whether he is aware that the President of the Local Government Board in England has directed that the Inspectors of the Local Government Board shall be instructed, in connection with their visits to workhouses, to give this subject their special attention, and to report to the Board as to the views and practice of the Guardians with respect to such supply; whether he will give, if he can do so legally, similar directions to Local Government Board Inspectors in Ireland; and whether, if the law in Ireland is in this respect different from the law in England, the Government will introduce a measure for the assimilation of the law in Ireland to the law in England on this subject?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There is no enactment specifically authorising Boards of Guardians to provide a supply of literature for workhouse inmates from the rates, though it is possible they may have such authority under their general powers. I am aware of the action taken in England referred to in the second paragraph. I am causing similar action to be taken in Ireland, and shall give the whole matter careful consideration.

THE FERMOY PROSECUTIONS.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether civil processes for damages have been issued by Mr. Thomas Barry, P.L.G., against District Inspectors Ball and Sergeant, R.I.C., Currabeha, Fermoy, in which the defendants are charged with assaulting and wounding the plaintiff; and whether, since plaintiff announced his intention of proceeding by civil bill for the assault, he has been served with a summons for having obstructed the police?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The legal proceedings appear to be still pending, and it would not be proper for me to make a statement in the matter.

MR. FLYNN: It is because legal proceedings are still proceeding that I put the question on the Paper.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am unwilling to answer a matter of fact in the question, because it might prejudice the action.

MR. T. M. HEALY: What is the matter of fact which might prejudice the case?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As far as I am concerned I should be glad to answer the question; what I refer to is the question of the dates of the two actions.

MR. T. M. HEALY: When Mr. Barry said that he would proceed against the police did they say that if he did so they would bring that charge against him?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think that the hon. Gentleman is in error. As he presses the question I will inform him that the police summons was on the 6th; the notification of the civil case was on the 9th.

MR. T. M. HEALY: That is not the point, as the right hon. Gentleman well knows. The point is that Mr. Barry, having informed the police that he should proceed civilly against them they immediately served him with notice of prosecution.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I know nothing of any threat on the part of Mr. Barry.

CATHOLICS IN IRISH PRISONS.

MR. CONYBEARE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state, for each of the months since September last, the number of Catholic prisoners confined in Derry Gaol, and the terms for which they have been imprisoned; whether any Catholic clergyman has, during that period, been permitted to visit such prisoners; has any Catholic service been conducted in the prison chapel during that period; whether he still refuses to sanction the appointment by the Bishop of the Diocese to the prison chaplaincy of such clergyman as the Bishop may see fit to nominate?

MR. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): May I ask if the hon. Member for Camborne, when in prison, received the ministrations of a Catholic chaplain?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The answer to the first paragraph is too long to read to the House, but I have directed a copy to be sent to the hon. Member who puts the question. Many of the prisoners have been confined but a very short time in Londonderry Prison, as since December last those Roman Catholic prisoners whose sentences amounted to a month or more have from week to week been removed to another prison to which a Roman Catholic clergyman is attached. In accordance with the practice of the Service, in relation to prisoners of any denomination other than those of the paid chaplains attached to a prison, the

Governor of Londonderry Prison duly reports to the nearest officiating Roman Catholic clergyman the committal of every new prisoner of that religion, with an intimation that permission can be had for visiting such prisoners. Such permission has, however, been availed of by the Roman Catholic clergyman of the district only eight times during the period in question, and then only at the request of individual prisoners. Owing to the refusal of the Vicar Capitular to nominate a successor to the late Roman Catholic chaplain, as fully explained in reply to a Parliamentary question in February last, no service has been conducted in the Roman Catholic Chapel in this prison during the period named. The Board are and have been most anxious that the Roman Catholic Bishop should nominate a clergyman to this prison, and in two letters addressed to the Vicar Capitular in September last they specially invited him to nominate some clergyman as successor to the late chaplain. Up to the present, however, they regret to state no such nomination has been made.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Was this one of the questions with regard to which Sir L. Simmonds was sent to communicate with the Pope, while pretending to go over about the Malta marriage question?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. MAC NEILL: Is it not a fact that the Rev. Dr. O'Doherty, the Roman Catholic chaplain of Derry Gaol, was dismissed from his office because he refused to attend a local inquiry held by Mr. Joyce, and refused to answer questions which he considered ought not to have been put to him as a Roman Catholic chaplain; has his action been ratified by the Vicar Capitular of the diocese; whether since September last there has been no Roman Catholic chaplain in Derry Gaol; and whether Catholics under lengthened terms of punishment have been removed to Belfast and other prisons?

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman will obtain better information by putting a question on the Paper.

MR. MAC NEILL: As a matter of personal explanation, I may say that I have asked every one of these questions before.

DR. KENNY: Has not Dr. O'Doherty been re-nominated?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Mr. O'Doherty was dismissed for breaking the Prison Regulations. If hon. Members wish for the details I must ask them to put a question on the Paper. I think it will not be denied that the ordinary procedure expected from a prison official was not followed, and we cannot accept his re-nomination by the Bishop of the diocese.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Have the Government gone the length of remonstrating at Rome as to the conduct of the Bishop?

MR. PARNELL: Does the right hon. Gentleman think that Roman Catholic prisoners should be permanently deprived of the consolation of their religion, in order to gratify his feelings as to the duties of the Roman Catholic Bishops? I think that this is not an unreasonable question, seeing that many months have elapsed during which these prisoners have been without any of the administrations of their religion.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have done my very best to minimise the evil effects of the action of the Vicar Capitular in this case, by sending the prisoners, as far as possible, to other prisons; I wish that my efforts in this direction had been seconded by the acting Bishop.

MR. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.): Was not a summons served on Dr. McAlroy, chaplain of Tullamore Gaol, to give evidence before Mr. Joyce relative to a suit of clothes which was taken in to the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) when a prisoner in that gaol; and is it not a fact that although Dr. McAlroy refused to appear or give evidence he was neither dismissed or censured; and whether he, the Chief Secretary, can explain why Father O'Doherty has been differently dealt with?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I musk ask for notice of that question.

MR. MAC NEILL: Was not the only offence of the Rev. Dr. O'Doherty that Mr. Joyce, the Prisons Board Inspector, had written a letter asking him to come over and give evidence in an investigation in a friendly way, and that Dr. O'Doherty had not done so?

DR. KENNY: What are the ill-effects of the action of Dr. O'Doherty?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The principal evil effected is that some of these prisoners have been deprived of the administrations of their religion.

"REGINA *V.* MITCHELL."

Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General, with reference to the confidential character of communications which passed between the Attorney General and the counsel for General Mitchell, whether he is aware that Messrs. Hare & Co., Agents to the Treasury, produced in Taxing Chambers Court of Queen's Bench a copy of one of these confidential letters to Master Archibald, taxing master, in support of a series of claims in their bill of costs in connection with the compromise; whether the gallant plaintiff reported the fact some weeks ago to the Attorney General; and whether Master Archibald struck out the whole of the items, and commented strongly on the course pursued by the Agents for the Crown?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. Webster, Isle of Wight): The hon. Member has been completely misinformed. One letter from Colonel Mitchell's counsel was produced at his request; otherwise it could not have been read. As I, in common with other members of the Government, have received a large number of letters from Colonel Mitchell, it is not possible for me to say whether he had referred to the fact or not. There is not the slightest foundation for the suggestion that Master Archibald commented strongly or adversely on the course pursued by Messrs. Hare & Co. in the matter referred to in the hon. Member's question.

Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will, in view of the decision in the Courts of Law in "Mitchell *v.* Regina," cancel the letter dated Treasury Chambers, 31st March, 1888, addressed to the Secretary of State for War?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: Search has been made, and no Treasury letter, relative to the Mitchell case, of the date named, or approaching that date, can be traced. If the hon. Member will furnish me with fuller particulars further search will be made.

HEREDITARY PENSIONS.

Mr. HANBURY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when he expects to be able to state to the House the long-promised proposals of the Treasury for the extinction of the remainder of the hereditary pensions, including some of the most contested of them; and whether, meanwhile, these all alike continue to be paid in full?

Mr. GOSCHEN: With regard to the proposals that were promised by the Treasury for the extinction of the remainder of the hereditary pensions, it is necessary that every case should be gone into separately. I am so much engaged at present that I am unable to give that minute attention to the subject which I desire that it should have. The pensions will be paid, as the Government have no option in the matter.

THE PROPOSED COMMITTEE ON LICENSING.

Mr. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness): In the absence of my hon. Friend the Member for the St. Ives Division of Cornwall, I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the intention of the Government to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the licensing system, especially with regard to the question of compensation, he will consider the desirability of instructing County Councils not to part with any money allocated to them for the extinction of licences until the Committee has reported to the House?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I understood the hon. Member was not going to put this question, and, therefore, am not prepared with an answer. The Committee referred to in the question at one time appeared to be desirable, but now it appears it is objected to. It must not be assumed the Government had the attention ascribed to them.

Sir W. HARCOURT: Arising out of this question I desire to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a question of which I have given him private notice. The following letter appeared in the *Times* of this morning:—

"Lord Wolmer has addressed the following letter to Mr. J. Shelly, Chairman of the Executive of the Devon and Cornwall Liberal Unionist Association:—

'Great George Street, Westminster, June 14.

'Dear Mr. Shelly,—Lord Hartington desires me to thank you for the information which you have given him of the strong opinions averse to certain clauses of the Local Government Bill, held by many of the staunchest and most valuable members of the Liberal Unionist Party in Devonshire and Cornwall. The opinion of these gentlemen is naturally a matter of much importance to the Liberal Unionist Party, and Lord Hartington desires me to assure you that he has given the very fullest consideration to the views and objections which they have put forward. The Government have consented to accept the Amendment proposed by Mr. Heneage, to insert a clause to the following effect:—"Provided always that nothing in this Act contained shall be construed as altering the existing law affecting the renewal of licences, or as giving to the holder of any licence any right or privilege other than that now enjoyed by him." Before it was known that the Government were willing to accept this Amendment, it is certain that many earnest temperance reformers honestly feared that the Bill would have the effect of altering the legal position of the publican: but now that this clause is to be added to it, Lord Hartington is unable to understand how it can be seriously contended, either that a vested interest not at present existing is created by this Bill, or that temperance legislation in the future can be prejudiced by it. The Government have also determined to propose next year that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and consider the questions on compensation which have been raised by the present and other proposals. The facts elicited by such an inquiry and the Report of such a Select Committee cannot fail greatly to facilitate the progress of temperance legislation in the future. The consideration of these facts will, Lord Hartington hopes, tend to allay the opposition of Liberal Unionists to the present attitude of the Government on this question.

'Believe me yours very truly,

'WOLMER.'"

Having read that letter I desire to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the statement made by Lord Wolmer in the name of Lord Hartington is or is not well founded?

VISCOUNT WOLMER (Hants, Petersfield): Perhaps the House will allow me to make a personal explanation in relation to this letter. I am authorised by Lord Hartington to say that he saw the draft of my letter to Mr. Shelly before it was sent, but that he did not particularly notice the expression "determined to propose," and that if he had he should have altered it into "are prepared to assent to," but that he did not, and does not now, attach the importance to the distinction which the right hon. Member for Derby appears to attach to it.

Sir W. Harcourt

*MR. SPEAKER: The noble Lord's remarks are hardly in the nature of a personal explanation.

SIR W. HARCOURT: After what the noble Lord calls a personal explanation, I have to repeat my question to the right hon. Gentleman—namely, whether the statement made by Lord Wolmer, on behalf of Lord Hartington, to induce the Liberal Unionists to vote for this Bill, is or is not well founded?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I thought we discussed this subject sufficiently last night; and I then stated to what extent the statement of the intentions of the Government was accurate. Lord Hartington appears to have been under the impression that the Government were willing that a Committee should be appointed. I have already explained, in answer to the hon. Member for Barrow, that the Government were under the impression that such a Committee was desired in many parts of the House, but certainly it was not the intention of the Government to move for such a Committee, and it is not the intention of the Government to ask the House to accept such a Committee, unless it is the strong desire of the House they should do so.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden): Does the right hon. Gentleman still adhere to the statement that the announcement of the Committee was not made to influence public opinion?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am strongly of the belief that that was so; but the hon. Gentleman is quite able to form his own opinion, and is not bound by mine.

SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): Is it the present intention of the Government to propose the Committee next year?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I stated a few minutes ago that we had certainly no intention of moving for such a Committee.

MR. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.): I will ask why the intention to appoint that Committee, which, as was explained by the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale, was entertained ever since the introduction of the noble Lord the Member for Paddington's Bill, was not divulged to the House during the discussion on the Local Taxation Bill, considering it would have had a most important bearing on the Bill.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I must really demur to the statement the hon. and learned Gentleman has made. He has attributed to the Government an intention which we do not entertain.

THE COURSE OF BUSINESS.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can now say whether the Government intend to ask the House to pass the Land Purchase Bill this year; and what proposal, if any, they will make in regard to the business of the House? I should also like to ask when the Government intend to introduce the Local Government Bill for Ireland, which was promised in Her Majesty's speech at the opening of the Session?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Perhaps it will be convenient that I should now make the statement which has been promised as to the course of public business. With reference to the last question asked, I am afraid I can make no engagement, so far as the present Session is concerned, and I think the hon. Member will see himself that the work which we have in hand would not justify the Government in asking the House to consider a question of such very great magnitude and complexity as that.

MR. SEXTON: You might print the Bill.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am myself of opinion that that course would be very undesirable. I have been under an engagement to the House to refer to the course of public business and the recommendations of the Government to facilitate the further progress of business. I must ask the House to cast its recollection back to the Debate which took place in March last on the Motion made by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Bridgeton, in which he endeavoured to bring us to the conclusion that it was most desirable that our sittings should be terminated earlier than has hitherto been customary, and also to bring about an earlier meeting of Parliament. I have from time to time been asked by hon. Gentlemen opposite as to the measures which the Government would propose with a view to effect what we understand to be the general wish of the House. Although that wish was not expressed by a decided majority of the House, it was the duty of the Government to give its serious consideration to the arguments used and the vote by which those arguments were supported. We were sensible of the fact that hon. Gentlemen who voted with us, in opposition to the Motion of the right hon. Baronet, did so although desiring that the Session might, as a rule, be brought to a conclusion at an earlier period. The Government have very carefully considered the measures necessary to accomplish that wish. One of those measures certainly would be an earlier assembly of Parliament than has hitherto been customary. Another would be, I hope, and I say so with great respect, some curtailment of the Debate on the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. A more important measure which we desire to propose for the consideration of the House is that a Standing Order should be passed under which it would be possible to suspend a Bill of great complexity, great detail, and considerable minutiæ which has been frequently in the possession of the House, but as to which when the month of June or July is reached insufficient time remains for its careful consideration in Committee. I refer to Bills of the character of the Land Purchase Bill, which ought not to be pushed through the House at any great or accelerated speed, on account of the varied and important interests involved.

An hon. MEMBER: You pushed the Coercion Act through the House.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am endeavouring to avoid any question which will occasion any controversy. I am endeavouring to avoid questions of controversy now. I am endeavouring to propose to the House regulations for the conduct of the business of the House, in the belief, and with a desire, that they will improve the procedure of the House, and enable it, whatever Government may be in power, to dispose of its business in a more satisfactory manner. The proposal we desire to make to the House is one by which it will be possible to suspend a Bill which has reached the Committee stage, by a Motion made in the then Session of Parliament, to carry it over to the next Session of Parliament, it being always understood that that Session is a Session of the existing Parliament. It will not be proposed that any suspended Bills should be taken up in a new Parliament, but that Parliament should be at liberty to take the suspended Bill up in a Session of the same Parliament, and to take it up on nearly the same footing as if it were an adjournment of the Session. The proposal we shall make is that a Standing Order should be passed, the terms of which will be placed on the Table either to-morrow or on Thursday. I will read the general terms of that Standing Order, without binding myself absolutely to the exact words. I am sure no hon. Member would desire that I should be bound absolutely to every word I will now give to the House.. I shall move—

> "That, in future Sessions after July 15, and in the present Session, after a day to be hereafter appointed, no public Bills (except money Bills, Continuance Bills, and Bills returned from the Lords, with Amendments) shall be further proceeded with, provided that, in respect of any public Bill which is in progress in Committee of the whole House, or in a Standing Committee, or which has been reported therefrom, a Motion may be made, after notice given, that further proceedings on such Bill be suspended until the next Session. If such Motion be carried, then in the ensuing Session (being a Session of the same Parliament) any Member whose name was on the suspended Bill may claim 'that the Resolution of the previous Session be read.' Thereupon the Speaker shall direct the Clerk to read the Resolution, and shall proceed to call on the Member to present the Bill in the form in which it stood when the proceedings thereon were suspended; and the questions on the First and Second Readings thereof shall be successively put forthwith. If both these questions be carried, the Bill shall be ordered to be printed, and if it had been partly considered in Committee in the previous Session, it shall stand committed to a similar Committee, and it shall be an Instruction to such Committee to begin their consideration of the Bill at the clause on which Progress was reported in the previous Session; but if it had been reported from Committee in the previous Session, the consideration of the Bill as reported shall be appointed for that day week."

We have sought, in framing this proposed Standing Order, to preserve to members all the rights and duties which belong to them in respect of the progress of any measure as far as the future progress of the measure is concerned, so that it will be taken up, after the formal first and second reading has been approved by the House, precisely at the point at which it was left in the previous Session, and any Amendments and any notices regarding the Bill will have to be dealt with according to the ordinary Rules and Regulations of the House. I think the best explanation I can give of the measure is that, consistently with the Rules of the House and consistently with the fact that in every Session a Bill must be read the first and second time, it will be simply an adjournment of the proceedings on a Bill, analogous in all respects to the adjournment which may take place with regard to a Bill in Committee from one day to another, from one week to another, and from one month to another. It will, perhaps, save time if I refrain from going into any argument in support of the proposal which I shall make on a later day, seeing that that will probably be the best time for the consideration of any objection that might possibly be urged. Presuming—which I hope may not be a rash presumption—that the House will be willing to adopt the Standing Order, which, I believe, will tend greatly to facilitate our business, I should ask the House to adjourn certainly the consideration of the Land Purchase (Ireland) Bill in Committee until next Session. I shall ask the House to continue and to pass the Local Taxation Bill which I believe is the only seriously contentious business, apart from the Irish Land Bill, which remains for the consideration of the House. I hope it may be possible to pass the Tithe Bill without very serious contention. I believe that the House generally does not desire that that question—a very thorny and difficult one—should remain undisposed of, and that we shall, if possible, arrive at a settlement which shall be fair and reasonable to all concerned, and which shall preserve a property which certainly neither the land lord, nor the farmer, nor the occupier in any sense has any claim or right to. I regard with apprehension the continuance of a condition of things which renders it possible that such a property may be in any degree damaged or lost. There is another Bill of very considerable importance which arises out of the proposals of Her Majesty's Government, and which is now in possession of the House, although it has not yet been read a second time, and that is the Police Bill. That, I hope is a Bill which is to be regarded as not a contentious measure or a Party measure, and, having regard to the importance of the claims of a most deserving body of men throughout the country, I hope I may regard that Bill as one which will not be met by what I should call Party opposition; and in case of that Bill being read a second time within a reasonable time, I think it may well go to a Standing Committee, in order that all the clauses and the schedules may be most carefully examined in the manner in which Standing Committees of this House do discharge their duties to the House. The Government will be prepared to accept the work of that Committee—I will not say absolutely, because it would be dangerous to say beforehand what the Government may feel it their duty to do—but the Standing Committee will, I am sure, deal with a Bill of this character in such a manner that the Government will, I hope, be able to accept their conclusions. There are two other Bills which have been frequently referred to, one by my hon. Friend behind me, and one by the junior Member for Northampton. I refer to the Western Australia Bill and to the Indian Councils Bill. These Bills must be passed. I say that with due respect to the House; but we feel that they must be passed in the course of the present Session, and we shall certainly put them in a front place at the earliest possible period, and shall ask the House to consider them as soon as we are relieved from Committee on the Local Taxation Bill. The Barracks Bill is also a measure of very great importance. It is not a large measure. It is one on which some difference of opinion prevails, and it is right that that difference of opinion should be fairly and fully discussed, but I hope it will pass without much delay. There is a Bill which has not been introduced, and as to which I hope little difficulty will arise. That is the Census Bill, which must also be passed this year. There remain two or three other measures, which, I think, are not contentious measures—one is the Housing of the Working Classes Amendment and Consolidation Bill—as to which I believe hon. Members on both sides of the House are in agreement that it is desirable that these measures should be passed into law this Session. The course we shall take with regard to these measures is to read them a second time, as quickly as possible, and send them to a Standing Committee. There is the Savings Banks Bill, to which I hope there will be very little opposition. There is a Bill which we should have been very glad to have pased into law this year, if time had permitted, but hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House have given notice of opposition, and have informed me privately, in the most frank manner, that they would feel it their duty to raise considerable discussion upon it. I refer to the Employers' Liability Bill. Under these circumstances, I do not think it would be possible for us to persevere with that Bill this Session. There is also another Bill with which we should wish to proceed, if possible, and I hope that an arrangement may be made with Scotch Members which will enable progress to be made with that measure. I refer to the Private Bill Procedure (Scotland) Bill, but if it should meet with anything like persistent opposition, it is not one in regard to which we should ask the House to prolong its sitting. I have not referred to all the Bills on the Paper, but I have referred to all the Bills of an important character, or rather of a character that would be likely to cause considerable discussion. There is also the Electoral Disabilities Removal Bill, which is a measure of some importance, and we shall endeavour to find time for it, but it is obvious that we cannot ask the House to sit for a prolonged period in order to pass that Bill. With regard to the Friendly Societies Bill, I am afraid it is not possible to pass that Bill this Session. The question is one of importance, but it is again one of those measures which, although not of a Party character, still deserves to be fully discussed, and, looking at the period of the Session and the desire of the House for an earlier adjournment than we have been accustomed to of late years, I am afraid it will be necessary to postpone its consideration for another Session. I am not aware whether there is any other point to which I need refer on the present occasion. It is obvious that we shall be desirous of proceeding with Supply at the earliest possible moment. We have no wish but to wind up the business of the Session as soon as possible. Probably there are few persons in this House on whom public business presses with so much severity as those who sit on these Benches, and there can be no desire on our part to prolong the Session.

Mr. SEXTON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he intends going through this enormous legislative programme before he comes to the financial business of the Session?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: The hon. Gentleman will find, when he considers the various measures I have referred to, that the legislative programme is not so enormous as he supposes. We desire to proceed with the Local Taxation Bill, but my impression is that a very few days will be sufficient to dispose of the other business to which I have referred. Almost the whole of them are practically of a non-contentious character. The Government do not intend to take up Supply until the Local Taxation Bill has been disposed of. There is the question of the Police Vote. With reference to all the circumstances of the case, the Government think it desirable that this should be considered as early as possible. We propose, therefore, to take the Vote on Friday—[An hon. Member: What Vote?]—the Metropolitan Police—and the Standing Order on Monday. I shall endeavour to place the Standing Order in the hands of Members on Thursday, and not later than Friday.

Mr. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): Do the Government propose to take a Vote on Account?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I hope not, Sir.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I rise for a very narrow and specific purpose, because I draw a broad distinction between the important statement which the right hon. Gentleman has just made with respect to the arrangement of the business for the present Session, and the notice he has given for the introduction of a new measure with respect to the business both now and hereafter. I presume the statement of the arrangements for the present Session may require some discussion, but into that I do not intend to go. I rise merely for the purpose of giving a notice and putting a question. We have heard the right hon. Gentleman's draft of the Standing Order, and I quite concur that he ought not to be held bound to the particular expressions of his Standing Order, particularly after the doctrine laid down to-night as to the explanation of a very important letter which appeared in the *Times*. The right hon. Gentleman is entitled to that after what we have heard as to the licences of construction and amendment. But that is not the matter in hand. The right hon. Gentleman seems to have given his notice, and I wish to give another notice on the same subject and in the same sense. I do not give the precise terms, but I wish to state that a Motion will be made, when the right hon. Gentleman proposes his Standing Order, from this side of the House, to the effect that so grave a change in the usage of Parliament and the practice of the Constitution ought not to be made without our having, agreeably to former precedents, previous examination by a carefully-selected Committee. That is the notice I have to give; but I wish also to put a question in the nature of a suggestion to the right hon. Gentleman, and I hope this further proposal will be acceptable to the right hon. Gentleman. It is in the nature of a suggestion—it is that, inasmuch as the subject has been on previous occasions before the House, all Bills which would now be extremely difficult of access—those Bills representing the positive action of the other branch of the Legislature, or representing proposals which that portion of the Legislature has entertained; I would ask whether the right hon. Gentleman will give directions for the re-printing of those Bills, and that they be circulated so that hon. Members may have the benefit of knowing the contents of those Bills?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I shall endeavour to comply with the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman, and the Bills shall be printed and circulated.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I have no doubt there will be included the Report of the Committee of this House upon a Bill sent down in 1848.

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I shall take care that the fullest information, as far as possible, shall be communicated to the House.

Mr. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I wish to ask a question of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, after the announcement which we have just heard as to the Land Purchase Bill. As the right hon. Gentleman is aware, with regard to the Ashbourne Act of 1888, it is not in the power of the Commissioners to receive applications after the funds placed at their disposal are exhausted. I have reason to believe that the funds will be exhausted certainly before the end of this year. The announcement that the Land Bill is to be abandoned for this year puts us in this position—the Bill can hardly become law for another 12 months, so that for a period of six months the Ashbourne Act will be suspended. I want to know whether the right hon. Gentleman is prepared for that suspension.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the right hon. Gentleman is unduly depressed both as to the amount of money and with regard to the time that it will take for the Land Bill to pass into law. He anticipates that the surplus money under the Ashbourne Act will all have been exhausted. I hope both prophecies are below the mark. I trust the money will last longer than he thinks, and I have every expectation that the Bill will have passed into law long before another year has passed by. If he asks me whether I should regret that any interval should elapse between the final conclusion of the Ashbourne Act and the inception of the policy of the Land Bill, I reply I should greatly regret it; and if it should arise it will be from other causes than those over which I have control. I shall not be responsible for it.

Mr. J. MORLEY: The right hon. Gentleman says that he should regret if there should be any suspension, and yet he says that the applications will not be sufficiently numerous to exhaust the funds. Those statements are opposed to each other.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Surely not.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I hope, now that the Land Purchase Bill has been abandoned till next Session, and in view of what took place in the Second Reading Debate, the Local Government Bill will be laid before the House and printed and circulated before we are called on to proceed further with the Land Bill.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I should require notice of that.

Mr. DILLON: I shall repeat it to-morrow.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I ask as to the India Councils Bill. I hope we shall have full notice when it will be taken. We ought to have at least two days' notice, and that should be possible under the new arrangement.

*Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I shall be glad if the First Lord will inform us when we shall have an opportunity of discussing the Report of the Royal Commission presided over by the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale?

Mr. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to give notice that when the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House moves his Standing Order, I shall move that it be extended to Bills passed by this House and rejected by the House of Lords.

*Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe): What will be done with regard to the Industrial Schools Bill and the Reformatories Bill, which have lately come from the House of Lords?

*Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): Are we to understand that when Bills are suspended by the Standing Order the Amendments will also be carried over?

*Mr. POWELL WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.): Will there be an earlier meeting of Parliament than usual next year?

*Captain VERNEY: I should like to remind the Government that two years ago the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury gave a definite and personal pledge to introduce a District Councils Bill in the Session next ensuing.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will be good enough to state whether, in arranging the programme, he has made any estimate of the day in December this Session will come to a close?

Sir W. HARCOURT: Do we understand that the right hon. Gentleman intends to sacrifice the Employers' Liability Bill to this Compensation Bill? I want a definite answer. If that Bill is not proceeded with very great objection will be taken to the Compensation Bill. Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to employ the time of the House on the Local Taxation Bill, to the exclusion of the Employers' Liability Bill?

Mr. H. GARDNER: Will the Tithes Bill be taken after the Local Taxation Bill?

Mr. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham): Will the Leader of the House consider the propriety of taking Wednesdays?

Mr. D. CRAWFORD: The right hon. Gentleman has overlooked the Corrupt Practices (Municipal Elections) Bill. It has been returned by the Grand Committee.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): There is the Police Superannuation Bill for Scotland. Is it intended to pass that during the present Session; and, if so, will it come into operation during the current year?

(5.30.) Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: May I ask whether it is intended to take any action on the Report of the Sweating Committee?

(5.30.) Mr. T. M. HEALY: I would ask why, when the Government pledged themselves to introduce a measure of Local Government for Ireland, nothing has been heard of it, while the Licensing Bill, of which no mention was made in the Queen's Speech, has been thrust to the front. As the Land Purchase Bill has been dropped, when may the House expect to see signs of the great Government policy for Ireland which was promised as far back as 1886?

(5.31.) Mr. SEXTON: I would inquire whether the right hon. Gentleman's plans are sufficiently far advanced to enable him to indicate on what day he will move his Resolution?

*(5.31.) Mr. W. H. SMITH: I will endeavour to reply to the numerous questions which have been addressed to me in the order in which they were asked; but in reply to the hon. Member for West Belfast, I may say that I proposed to move the Resolution on Monday next. In view of the request of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, that the House should be furnished with copies of certain Bills and that every effort should be made to place them in the hands of Members at once, I shall have to see whether it is possible to adhere to Monday. As to the Indian Councils Bill, the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) must see that at present I cannot hold myself bound to any particular date. Notice will be given before the Bill is taken. The Government hope that the Employers' Liability Bill will be received with consideration and without occupying much of the time of the House. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Broadhurst) shakes his head, and if he implies by that that much time will be occupied in dealing with the measure, I am afraid it will be impossible to take it. This, and the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Bill, are non-contentious Bills—if they are contentious, there will be difficulties in the way of proceeding with them. But we shall place the Bills before the House, and it will be for the House to say whether they are to become law. As to the Report of the Royal Commission, the understanding is that any observations which hon. Gentlemen may think it right to make on that Report will be properly taken on the War Office Vote, which we shall put forward as soon as possible. An hon. Member asked whether the Amendments on the Paper to the Land Purchase (Ireland) Bill, which is to be suspended, can be carried ever to next Session. My impression is that it will be possible to do that; but under any circumstances, the Amendments can remain on the Paper, and it will be for hon. Members to direct the clerk at the Table to put them back again as they are next Session. It certainly is the intention of the Government to recommend an earlier meeting of Parliament next year, with a view to securing an earlier adjournment. [An hon. Member: When will the Session commence?] I am afraid I can hardly say that. Perhaps all that is desired by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridgeton will not be attained, but a great deal of it will be, we hope. I can only say that we hope and desire to pass the Tithe Bill, and as to the District Councils Bill, we have a great desire to bring it in; but the prolonged discussion on other Bills has made it impossible to do so. It is suggested that, with reference to the Votes in Supply, Wednesdays should be taken by the Government. No doubt it will be the duty of the Government to ask the House for Wednesdays later in the Session. [An hon. Member: What about Sundays?] But there are still some Bills which private Members have in hand, and I think it would be hardly fair to them to ask the House to give the Government Wednesdays, at any rate, not for two or three more Wednesdays. The Scotch Police Superannuation Bill, I am informed by the Lord Advocate, is in a forward state of preparation, and I hope it will be accepted by Scotch Members, and will not meet with opposition. The Corrupt Practices

(Scotland) Bill is practically, I believe, accepted by Scotch Members. It has been passed by the Standing Committee and is now for consideration on Report, and I take it for granted that it will pass without much delay. In regard to the Local Government (Ireland) Bill, I cannot enter into an argument with the hon. Member for Longford about the precedence due to this Bill. We are anxious to introduce such a measure, but we must introduce measures in the order we think best; and we cannot undertake to introduce this Bill until the Land Purchase Bill has, at all events, attained considerable progress in this House.

(5.39). MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I do not wish to extend the remarks I have made, but I think it is impossible that I should allow the statement of the right hon. Gentleman to remain without one or two observations. It appears to me that the upshot of what we have heard is this: that everything in the House in which the Government are interested, or in which anybody else is interested, is to be sacrificed for the Licensing Bill. It is the Licensing Bill obviously, and it is the Licensing Bill alone, which blocks the way. If it remains in the position in which it now stands, the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, to which we had all fondly looked forward as the harbinger of shortened labours is, on the contrary, a distinct intimidation to us of a Session of indefinite length. The right hon. Gentleman has been very laudably anxious to pass the Tithe Bill, because, whether all its principles are right or not, the object of the Government is to save a property which is recognised as national property. But whenever the right hon. Gentleman is asked about the Licensing Bill, the answer always is that the Government are determined to pass it. Yet to-day, in reference to the Tithe Bill, he can only say that he desires and hopes to pass it. Desires are uncertain and hopes are shadowy and unsubstantial affairs. The determinations of the Government are confined, as it appears—except in regard to an Indian Bill and the Western Australia Bill—to the Licensing Bill, which was never mentioned in the Queen's Speech or even heard of before the middle of the Session. Therefore, I am justified in pointing out the extraordinary position in which we stand. Even as to the Indian Councils Bill, the right hon. Gentleman cannot say when the discussion will be taken on that Bill and on the Western Australia Bill. Then the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Bill is of the greatest importance; but that is to be sacrificed for the sake of the Licensing Bill, if any difficulty should arise, and some time, it appears, must be required in disposing of it. For the Barracks Bill, one of the important measures of the Government, which they think to be essential to the well-being and comfort of the Army, no time can be mentioned, although we have now passed a half of the month of June. The Employers' Liability Bill is a Bill directly touching the welfare of the mass of the labourers of this country, and this Bill is, if need be, to be sacrificed—for it is virtually given up this evening—in order to prosecute a measure which the working classes of this country, from one end of this country to the other, absolutely detest.

(5.44.) SIR C. LEWIS (Antrim, N.): Is it in order, Sir, that any hon. Member disagreeing with the right hon. Gentleman should enter into this controversy?

*(5.44.) MR. SPEAKER: Although there is no question directly before the House, it is usual on such special occasions as this to allow some latitude.

*(5.44.) MR. W. H. SMITH: Perhaps my hon. Friend will, for the convenience of the House, allow this very limited discussion to take place.

(5.45.) MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: The only alternative to the latitude which it is usual to grant on such a special and peculiar occasion as this is to make a Motion for the adjournment on the ground that the right hon. Gentleman's statement raises questions of pressing urgency for the House. I do not desire to take that course. What I want to ask is, partly in the tone of a question and inquiry and partly in the tone, if I may so say, of expostulation and even of entreaty, whether we are still to see in this Licensing Bill, not only the measure to which, on its merits, we so fundamentally object, but also the instrument by which this Session is to be indefinitely prolonged and other valuable measures, which we are anxious to welcome and discuss fairly, and to pass, are to be placed in the extremest danger or are at once to be sacrificed? Is it the intention of the Government still to press forward this Licensing Bill and to pass it into law?

*(5.46.) MR. W. H. SMITH: Perhaps the House will allow me to reply very shortly to the observations of the right hon. Gentleman. He asks me in a tone of expostulation and entreaty whether it is the intention of the Government to press forward the Licensing Bill; and he attributes to the Government the whole of the delay and responsibility for the whole of the delay in public business which has been caused by the Bill to which he refers. The right hon. Gentleman has a very long experience of this House, and I think he must admit that the Government are at liberty and are bound to press forward measures which they believe to be necessary in the interests of the country at large, even although a minority of the House may entertain very strong views as to those measures. I think I should be inclined to address to the right hon. Gentleman, and to those who are acting with him, an entreaty that they will permit a measure, after reasonable discussion, to be passed by a majority of this House. There are times and seasons in which opposition may fairly and properly be developed, and it is right that those who differ from any measure should put their reasons and statements frankly before the country and the House. After that has been done, I venture to ask whether the Government is responsible for the repetition of Motions, of statements, and of arguments which unduly occupy the time of the House? Is it to be laid down by the right hon. Gentleman as a canon of Parliamentary law that if the Opposition take a strong view as to a particular measure they are at liberty to demand from the Government that that measure shall not be pressed? Those who are responsible for the business of the House are at least bound to take the course which they believe to be right, and we are at liberty to appeal to the House not indefinitely and unreasonably—if I may use the word without offence—to prolong Debates upon questions which have been already decided by the House. With ordinary discussion it may yet be possible, without asking for any sacrifice on the part of Members, to pass many of those Bills which the right hon Gentleman has mentioned. I should be glad to avail myself of the opportunity of passing those measures, and I am therefore unwilling to be responsible for discharging them from the Orders. If the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends can assist the House in discharging its duty I shall heartily welcome their aid.

(5.50.) MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Are we to understand that the Government intend to proceed with the Local Taxation Bill until it has gone through Committee, and that until that is done they will postpone the consideration of all other measures?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am afraid that we must take that course.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to give notice that when the Census Bill is introduced, I shall move clauses in it to enable the Irish people to express their views as to the government of their country, so that we may be able to ascertain the exact strength of the contented minority.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Do the Government seriously mean to postpone their proposals as to Irish Local Government until the Land Purchase Bill has been disposed of, next year, or the year after?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have already stated that the Local Government Bill for Ireland will not be introduced in the present Session. It would be contrary to all precedent for me to state the course which the Government may take in the next Session of Parliament.

MR. WADDY: Can the right hon. Gentleman tell us whether he has formed any estimate as to when we are likely to finish the Session?

MR. PICTON: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has any evidence, through the usual channels of Party information, that the majority of the people in this country prefer the Compensation Bill to the Irish Local Government Bill?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have no evidence whatever as to any agreement in the country about the Irish Local Government Bill.

DR. TANNER: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will not re-consider this question with regard to Irish Government, which was referred to in the Queen's Speech this year, or whether he will remain satisfied with his present lucrative position of public executioner?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, following the precedent of the Local Government Bill of 1888, he will lay on the Table a Paper showing the probable amount which will be given to each county under the three heads of the provisions of the Local Taxation Bill?

*MR. RITCHIE: I will endeavour to meet the right hon. Gentleman's views. I may say, however, it will be impossible to give with any accuracy the amount which will be received by counties and county boroughs in those counties in which there are county boroughs.

ENDOWED CHARITIES (OXFORDSHIRE).

Return ordered—

"Of the Digest of Endowed Charities in the County of Oxford, the particulars of which are recorded in the books of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales, but are not recorded in the General Digest of Endowed Charities in that County, 1869-70 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 292 (2), of Session 1871)."—(*Mr. James William Lowther.*)

METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT AND BUILDING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Ordered, That the parties appearing before the Select Committee on the Metropolis Management and Building Acts Amendment Bill have leave to print the Minutes of the Evidence taken before the Committee, day by day, from the Committee Clerk's Copy, if they think fit.—(*Sir George Trevelyan.*)

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Committee.

1. "That, in the case of the Wellingborough and District Tramroads Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that Clause 54 be struck out of the Bill:—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

2. "That, in the case of the Great Eastern Railway Bill, Petition of the 'Commissioners of Sewers of the City of London,' for dispensing with Standing Order 129 in the case of their Petition against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

3. "That in the case of the Stratford-upon-Avon, Towcester, and Midland Junction Railway, Petition for leave to deposit a Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to deposit their Petition for a Bill."

Resolutions agreed to.

WELLINGBOROUGH AND DISTRICT TRAMROADS BILL [LORDS].

Report from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

Twelfth Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

BANKRUPTCY CASES (CORK AND BELFAST).

Return ordered—

"Of Petitions in Bankruptcy and Arrangements, within the jurisdiction of Belfast and Cork Local Bankruptcy Courts respectively, filed in the Court of Bankruptcy in Dublin from the 1st day of June 1889 to the 1st day of June 1890:—

Number of Petitions filed.	By debtors.	By creditors.	Number of creditors in each case.	Number of creditors resident in Ulster in the case of a Belfast Petition.	Number of creditors resident in Munster in the case of a Cork Petition.	Number resident elsewhere.
1						
2						
3						
4						
Total.. ..						

—(*Mr. Peter M'Donald.*)

ORDNANCE SURVEY.

Returns ordered—

"Of the number and amount of the Increases of Pay granted to Civil Assistants employed on skilled duties in each year, from 1877-8 to 1889-90 .—

Year.	Number of Civil Assistants on the 1st day of April—		Number who received Increases of Pay—		Per centage who received Increases of Pay.	Aggregate amount of Increases for the Year.	Average for each person.		Amount of Survey Vote.
	Entitled to pension.	Not entitled to pension.	Entitled to pension.	Not entitled to pension.			Per diem.	Per annum.	

"Of the number and amount of Increases of Pay granted to Royal Engineers in each year, from 1877-8 to 1889-90 :—

Year.	Total number employed on the 1st day of April.	Number who received Increases of pay.	Per centage who received Increases of Pay.	Aggregate amount of Increases for the year.	Average for each person.		Amount of Survey Vote.
					Per diem.	Per annum.	

"And, of the numbers and Rates of Pay of the Civil Assistants and Temporary Civil Assistants employed on skilled duties on the Ordnance Survey on the 1st day of April in each of the years 1877, 1880, 1885, and 1890.

Date.	Numbers of Civil Assistants and Temporary Civil Assistants.									
	Under 5s. per diem.		5s. and under 10s. per diem.		10s. and under 15s. per diem.		15s. and under 20s. per diem.		20. to 25s. per diem.	
	Number.	Per centage.	Number.	Per centage.	Number.	Per centage.	Number.	Per centage.	Number.	Per centage.

—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883.

Return ordered—

"Showing for the High Court and for each County Court District (1) the total number of Cases closed during the years 1888 and 1889 which were administered in a summary manner under section 121 of 'The Bankruptcy Act, 1883;' (2) the number of such Cases in which the Statement of Affairs showed Assets exceeding £300, and in which the Assets realised more than £300 and less than £300 respectively; and (3) the number of such Cases in which the Statement of Affairs showed Assets less than £300, but in which the Assets realised more than £300:—

District.	Total number of closed Cases administered Summarily.		Number of summary Cases in which Statement of Affairs showed Assets exceeding £300—				Number of summary Cases in which Statement of Affairs showed Assets less than £300, but in which the Assets realised more than £300.	
			In which Assets realised more than £300.		In which Assets realised less than £300.			
	1888.	1889.	1888.	1889.	1888.	1889.	1888.	1889.

—(*Sir Charles Lewis.*)

MOTION.

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

(6.0.) Mr. Labouchere, Member for Northampton, rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House, for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the serious condition of Public Business, which has been caused by the mismanagement of the Government: but the pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. Speaker called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than 40 Members having accordingly risen:—

Mr. LABOUCHERE: The First Lord of the Treasury has given notice of his intention to move an alteration in the Standing Orders with regard to carrying Bills over until the next Session, and he has also laid down a programme of business to be taken during the present Session. The right hon. Gentleman seems to be under the impression that his programme will be received with thanks by the Opposition side of the House, and that it is a fair and legitimate and proper one for the facilitation of public business. The House ought to look back a little in order to consider what it is that has brought it into the present difficulty, because most unquestionably the House at the present moment is in a very great mess and muddle, which, I contend, is entirely due to the action of the Government. At the beginning of the Session there was, as usual, a Speech from the Throne. In it the House was told that certain Bills would be brought forward, but, in addition to this, it is desirable to remember, for no particular reason that I could understand, Parliament met later this Session than in any previous Session. I think, however, that the Government programme, as then laid down, was a full programme. We were told there was to be a Bill to alter the present system of Tithes, a Bill for Land Purchase in Ireland, and it was indicated there would be a Bill for the Local Government of Ireland. These were to be the Government Bills, as the House understood. But the Irish Local Government Bill has disappeared. It was only after Whitsuntide that the Bill for Land Purchase in Ireland was read a second time; but suddenly, just before Whitsuntide, it was sprung upon the

House in a sort of indirect, incidental way at first, that it would have to consider the question of compensation for the publicans whose licences were not to be renewed. If Her Majesty's Ministers had looked at the question as practical men, seeing what is the ordinary habit of the House in regard to discussion, knowing that the Land Bill for Ireland would meet with the strongest opposition, knowing that the Tithe Bill would be most exhaustively discussed, they must have seen that it was monstrous and preposterous for the First Lord then to spring upon the House this Compensation Bill. But surely the House had a right to suppose that the prominent and important measures of the Session were those mentioned in the Queen's Speech. So far as I can see, Ministers were not entirely at one with each other. Each Member of the Government had his own little Bill. The Chief Secretary had his Land Bill, and the right hon. Gentleman wanted to distinguish himself in the matter. I do not say that it is a case of absolute jealousy between the Chief Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but they are two eminent Gentlemen, sitting on the same Bench, and each is eager to distinguish himself. Then there is another element. We have not the advantage of possessing the Prime Minister as a Member of this House, but the House has the son of the Prime Minister perpetually coming forward like Master Wackford Squeers, and asking when a Bill in which his father was apparently especially interested was going to be put before the House. We have heard of persons trying to drive three coaches abreast through Temple Bar, but here we have three gentlemen on the Treasury Bench trying to cut each other out, and each trying to push forward his own Bill. This is the cause of the block. But, surely, the First Lord of the Treasury does not forget that he is under a pledge to the House. During the last two or three Sessions the consideration of the Estimates has been persistently put off until the end of the Session. We know what that means. We know that in August there is the greatest anxiety on the part of Members to get away for the holidays, and any hon. Member who wishes fairly to discuss questions connected with the Estimates finds the greatest difficulty in resisting the general feeling then prevalent, and the question is probably allowed to drop. The House was told last Session that the Government would bring forward the Estimates early this Session. Undoubtedly, some Estimates were considered at an early period, and I and my hon. Friends showed ourselves to be most kindly disposed towards the right hon. Gentleman. In two or three days a great many Votes were passed—an exceptional number, considering the time devoted to them. About 32 days are ordinarily devoted to the Estimates in the course of a Session. Up to the present this Session we have only had six or seven days. If, then, we take the average number of days, the First Lord of the Treasury will see that we have a claim for at least 20 more days for Supply. There are most important matters connected with the Estimates at the present time. There has hardly been a single Irish Debate during the present Session. The Irish Members have given a free hand to Ministers, but they wish to raise most important points on the Estimates. At present Ireland is governed under exceptional legislation, and the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian once said that so long as this kind of legislation is in force every Irish Representative has a perfect right to bring forward any case of injustice or unfairness in the administration of the law. The Law Courts in Ireland are closed, but the House of Commons is open to the Irish Members and the Irish people. The Government now say that they are going to proceed with this miserable Publicans' Compensation Bill. How long do they think the discussion will last? I think that the Bill will scarcely get through all its stages within a fortnight. There is also the proposal to alter the Standing Order. How long does the right hon. Gentleman think this will take? The First Lord of the Treasury seems to be under the impression that the House is not going to discuss this alteration; *in limine* I protest against the proposed alteration being a Standing Order, but Amendments will have to be proposed and discussed. Then, when will there be time for the Estimates? Their consideration will have to be put off until some time in August, and if the House takes 20 days for their consideration, this will carry the sitting of the House into September. There will be protests raised by the Government against what is described as the obstruction of the Opposition, but it ought to be clearly laid before the country that it is not obstruction which causes the delay, but the utter muddling of Her Majesty's Ministers. The Government have no right, at any time, to put off the consideration of the Estimates until August or September, and they have especially no right in the present Session, in view of their former pledges, and in view of the fact that they have taken away the Private Members' days. In these circumstances it would be desirable that the House should have an opportunity of registering a protest against the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government in the present Session, and, therefore, I beg to move that the House do now adjourn.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

(6.15.) Mr. PARNELL (Cork): I think the hon. Member for Northampton is entitled to the thanks of the House for the action he has taken in reference to this important subject. There is no question which can more profitably occupy the time of the House than an attempt to search out some method by which we may rescue the House from the entanglement, the morass in which Her Majesty's Government have landed us by their utter mismanagement of public business. We have listened to-night with the utmost interest to the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman as to the Government proposals. Speaking for myself, I can only say that the result of my attention to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman is to fill my mind with dismay as to the future. When I heard the right hon. Gentleman calmly going over the long list of measures that he proposed to save from the annual slaughter of the innocents, and ending with 108 Votes in Supply, and with the Amendment of the Rules of Procedure under the guise of a new Standing Order, I was obliged to bring my mind forward to the almost certain probability that the House, if it is to carry out the programme of the right hon. Gentleman, will find itself sitting at the beginning of October. If there is to be proper attention given to the various measures named by the right hon. Gentleman, and proper discussion of the financial, colonial, English, Scotch, and Irish questions which must arise on the various Votes in Supply, we cannot possibly hope to leave this House for our holidays before an interval of three months. It is time for the House to do something to help the Government out of this mess, to accept the invitation extended to it by the First Lord of the Treasury to assist the Government, not, indeed, in the futile way suggested by the right hon. Gentleman, but to assist the Government against their own incapacity. For the position in which we are now, and the tenfold worse position in which we shall be if we are to allow the Government to plunge deeper into the morass, is due to the want of all ordinary power of calculation, on the part of the Government, as to the management of their business since the beginning of the Session. I should not be justified in doing more than referring to the new Standing Order to be proposed by the right hon. Gentleman. It may be a good thing in a small way, but it appears to be ludicrously inadequate for the object in view. The right hon. Gentleman himself seems to be conscious of the ridiculous mouse he has produced, and every one who listened to him must know that his proposal will be utterly inadequate. The fact of the matter is that the Government proposal is not a proposal to do more work, but to throw away the work which it has undertaken unwisely, and without due calculation of its own powers, after much time has been lost upon it. The proposal does not go to the root of the question. It will not enable the House to do a particle more work. It will, when we have lost valuable time, leave us, after we have lost days and nights in considering grave Constitutional questions, in as bad a position as we are in at present. Surely it is not too late to ask the Government to retrace their steps, to take the House into their confidence, and ask the House how we may save the relics of the Session. We have not had a single Irish Vote brought forward yet. We have been asked for various Votes on Account. The Constitutional power of the House over the grant of money to the Crown for the service of the year is a real question with us in Ireland, although it may be only a formal question with you in England. In Ireland the Crown has unfettered control, and the Estimates give us the only opportunity we have of stopping the Chief Secretary in his arbitrary career in Ireland. In these circumstances we have a right to ask that the Estimates should be brought forward in reasonable time, and that the Constitutional powers of the House should not be constantly abrogated as they have been by Her Majesty's Government. The House has been considering the question of procedure for many years. I remember when an attempt was made to deal with the subject 15 years ago. I then ventured to predict that no Amendment of the Standing Orders would be ever worth the time spent upon it, and I venture now to predict that you will lose your time more completely than you have done before in discussing the new Standing Order. If the Government had been composed of statesmen, they would not have ventured to come down to the House with this absurd and preposterous proposal, utterly insufficient as it is for the rescue of the House from the embarrassing position in which they have placed it by the mismanagement of the affairs intrusted to their keeping. I will only say, in conclusion, that if the Government will come before the House with a reasonable proposal with regard to the business to be transacted during the rest of the Session, and with a selection of such measures as are measures of public utility, sought by the country and by all parts of the House, and measures which can be passed without exciting political passion, and if they will carry into effect the mind and the wish of Parliament, they may use the limited time still left at their disposal most profitably to the public interests, and most satisfactorily to the House and the country at large.

(6.25.) Mr. HANBURY (Preston): I do not propose to offer any arguments whatever on the proposal of the Government, to make a new rule for the despatch of business; but I do ask the Government seriously to consider whether they are taking a wise, or even a Constitutional, step in postponing Supply while

they press forward legislation. The first duty of the House is, in my opinion, to vote the ordinary Supply for the services of the country, and I also firmly believe it is the duty of hon. Members to discuss the proposals for Supply at adequate length. This Session the House has treated the Government very generously with regard to Supply. Two or three Votes on Account have been taken, and the Government are really drifting into a false position if they insist upon passing their Bills before they deal with Supply. I do not want to see them drift into a false position; and I believe they will be neglecting their duty if they endeavour to vote large sums of money for the service of the country without adequate discussion at the end of a very long Session, and when the House is wearied. Before they definitely make up their minds on the subject I ask them to seriously consider the matter, and to let the House have a proper opportunity of voting Supply in the ordinary way.

*(6.27.) Mr. S. T. EVANS (Glamorgan, Mid): In relation to the question of the conduct of public business, I desire to draw attention to what occurred last night. I had the honour of moving an Amendment, on behalf of my hon. Friend the Member for the Carnarvon Boroughs, which related to the unfortunate Licensing Bill, and the Debate was closured in 50 minutes.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member cannot raise the question upon the present Motion.

*Mr. S. T. EVANS: What I wish to do, Sir, is to call attention to the fact that the Government have invariably this Session closured Welsh Members. A very important Instruction on the Tithes Bill was proposed by the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. F. S. Stevenson), on which one of the oldest and most respected Welsh Members was desirous of speaking, and yet the Government thought it their duty to closure the hon. Member.

*Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think that line of argument is at all permissible on the Motion for the Adjournment of the House on "a definite matter of urgent public importance."

*Mr. S. T. EVANS: I will only say I can assure the Government that it is not the best way to facilitate business to closure Members who are not obstructing.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

(6.29.) MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I have looked at the Amendment Paper, and find that there are exactly 18 pages of Amendments which have to be dealt with on the Local Taxation Bill. I will simply remark with regard to them that a large number raise questions of very serious and grave importance. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) has had an opportunity—I daresay a very painful opportunity to him—of seeing how slow the progress has been on that Bill. I think he may fairly infer what the future of the Bill will be from what has already taken place, and I think he needs a warning from us that the importance which we conscientiously attach to the Amendments will justify us in discussing them at considerable length, and, therefore, in monopolising a considerable portion of the time left us this Session. To a certain extent I sympathise with the right hon. Gentleman, and we have heard with universal regret that his labours have had a prejudicial effect upon his health. He has our hearty sympathies on that account, whatever may be our political differences. I noticed the other day a statement to the effect that the right hon. Gentleman had conveyed to his political supporters that if they persisted in their demand for an Autumn Session he would have to retire from his arduous duties. Well, but he proposes to inflict upon himself that very Autumn Session against which he warned his supporters with a threat of retirement. If the Government persist with this Licensing Bill we shall be sitting in this House through September and October, and probably even later; we shall have all the inconveniences of an Autumn Session without the compensating advantage an Autumn Session sometimes gives. The right hon. Gentleman is bound to look with a considerable amount of alarm and distress on the present condition and temper of Parliament. I join in the desire that the Parliamentary machine should be thoroughly effective, that our proceedings should be carried on with order and decorum and all necessary dispatch. But the management of the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues has brought us to something little short of chaos and anarchy, and if we are to proceed with these clauses of this Bill that chaos and anarchy will increase day by day. The right hon. Gentleman must know that Members on this side would not dare to take the attitude of uncompromising hostility to this Bill we have taken if we were not convinced that the opinion of the country is at our back. I do not wish to depart one hairs-breadth from the narrow limits of such a Motion as this, and if I do so it is in spite of my intention. Upon this Bill, for which the Government are sacrificing everything, they had the opportunity of knowing long ago the mind of the country. Two years ago those same proposals were rejected by the voice of the country, and the Government listened to that voice. So far as this Standing Order which is to be proposed may lead to the acceleration of the business of the House the object of the right hon. Gentleman will have our sympathy, but let me point out that interference with the rules that govern the proceedings of this assembly is one of the greatest enterprises a Minister can embark upon, and whoever essays to change the time-honoured usages of Parliament must do so seriously, carefully deliberating with due regard to many important considerations, and he must be prepared to have his proposals sharply criticised. Why, some years ago, the Minister of the day thought it necessary to devote the whole of an Autumn Session to the carrying out of new rules, and certainly it is not the proper time to make such an alteration suddenly towards the end of a Session, when Members are fagged and irritated with protracted discussions. Such a proposal should come at the beginning of a Session, when the House is fresh and Members willing to undertake the task of considering such an alteration. The right hon. Gentleman must not be surprised if we consider it our duty to examine his proposal with due reflection, and I give him fair warning—he has received a warning from the leader of the Opposition, and I repeat it—in bringing a new Standing Order before the House, to relieve himself from the difficulties of his own mismanagement, he must not calculate upon the Order being allowed to pass without serious discussion. The attention of the right hon.

Gentleman has been called to the serious character of the Bills he is sacrificing to this most unfortunate, this iniquitous, measure. What will the working classes say when they learn that a Bill to protect their lives and limbs is, in spite of an almost unanimous feeling in its favour, sacrificed in favour of a Bill to support which the Government cannot bring forward their ordinary majority in this House. Here is a serious question for the right hon. Gentleman's consideration. He has been an attentive and a pained observer of the fortunes of the Compensation Bill. He has seen his majority, which a few years ago was upwards of 100, and even at the beginning of this Session 70 or 80, reduced to a majority of 32. There is the handwriting on the wall. There is a state of almost mutiny among his followers, only kept from public expression by the strong ties of Party discipline and the sense of common danger. If he paid any attention to these signs he would see in the face of a vehement Opposition, supported by public opinion, that it is almost insane to press these proposals as he is pressing them. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not think I have spoken in language too warm as to this measure. Sincerely I deplore the position into which he has got himself. I offer him hearty sympathy in his difficulties. If hon. Members think they help the right hon. Gentleman by compelling us to sit here until October, they do not take my view of the personal difficulties of his position. I repeat, in spite of the jeers of hon. Members opposite, I sympathise with him in the grave difficulties imposed upon him by the Government attitude on this Bill, and I hope, even at the eleventh hour, he may see his way to abandon the path of fatuous obstinacy upon which he has entered, and will withdraw a Bill condemned by a united Opposition, by the country, and by the murmurs of his own followers.

*(6.40.) THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I have listened with interest to the epithets that have been applied to me in the course of this Debate. I accept them as Parliamentary language which hon. Gentlemen unfortunately feel themselves compelled to use in regard to a political opponent.

Mr. T. P. O'Connor

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: The right hon. Gentleman will allow me to say that any epithets I may have used were applied to measures and not to himself.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: No doubt, it was Parliamentary language used under the belief that it was justified as applied to the leader of the House for his conduct of public business. The hon. Gentleman who introduced this Debate by way of forwarding our discussions and assisting public business, has moved the adjournment of the House, is the hon. Member who, I think, I am not wrong in saying has taken pride in the difficulties he has placed in the way of business. From time to time, both here and out of doors, he has avowed his intention to obstruct the business of the Government as far as he possibly can. I apprehend that whether it were the Licensing Bill or any other Bill which the Government had thought it necessary to proceed with the same system of opposition to the Government he is desirous of destroying would undoubtedly have been adopted by the hon. Gentleman.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I said I would oppose all bad Bills. If the right hon. Gentleman would bring in any Bill that I consider good I should be happy to support it.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: In other words, if we would make arrangements by which the hon. Gentleman could pass his judgment upon all measures we propose to introduce, and proceed only with those having his approval, then we would be free from his opposition in this House. I have stated what I understand to be the view and the attitude of the hon. Member in regard to public business. His practice has been what I have stated, without colour or exaggeration. I shall not go back on what I have before said, that Her Majesty's Government must be responsible for the measures they ask the House to take into consideration, and the House will consider whether the practice which now prevails of carrying on a protracted Debate on measures of which the principle has been accepted is for the advantage of the House, and is calculated to establish the reputation of the House as a legislative machine and as the representative body of this Empire; or whether such practice will not endanger the efficiency of this House whatever Government may be in power, when this method of opposition—I do not use the word obstruction, which might more correctly describe the attitude taken up—when this practice is adopted as the usual custom. What is done to-day and now under the belief that it is justified by the peculiar circumstances of a particular measure will be done to-morrow, next year, and in future Parliaments and with regard to successive Governments that may be in Office. It is for the House to take the matter into its own hands. We may be wrong; hon. Gentlemen opposite believe us to be wrong in having introduced this measure, and wrong in pushing it forward; but the Government believe that they are right. I regret that the practice and traditions that have hitherto prevailed are being abandoned—the practice that, when the House of Commons has fully considered a measure, the opposition to it shall not be continued to such a degree that all the time of the Session shall be occupied with that measure, and no time shall be left for the consideration of any other measures. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton remarked that the Government were sacrificing the interests of the working man. I deny absolutely that this is the case. I do so without desiring in the least degree to make any statement that might produce heated controversy in this House; but, again, I say that we are acting upon our rights and in accordance with our duty in pressing forward measures which we believe to be necessary. If those measures are to be opposed at such length in this House, that other measures which are of great importance to the interests of the country cannot be considered, the responsibility rests upon those who protract the Debates and who will not permit the House to come to a conclusion upon them, and so postpone the passing of measures that are admitted to be of importance to the country. That is the view I humbly take in this matter. It is only reasonable that the Opposition should charge the Government with having involved the House in difficulties, and with having introduced chaos and anarchy into its proceedings. I am accustomed to charges of that character. Very likely I have not been successful in my conduct of business, but I must act according to the best of my lights. I must speak plainly and honestly to the House, and I entreat them to give us permission to go forward, after a fair protest, with the measures which we believe are for the interest and the good of the country, and which can be disposed of in the course of the present Session without unduly protracting it, without putting an undue tax upon the time of hon. Members. I trust the House will credit me with honesty of statement. In the conduct of public business I think it is only right that when a Bill has been entered upon it should be proceeded with, and so soon as this Bill (the Local Taxation Bill) is concluded, I will endeavour to make fresh arrangements which will, I hope, meet the reasonable desires of hon. Gentlemen, and take steps for making further progress with business—with Supply and the other important measures which can be considered by the House—without making any further great claim on the health and time of hon. Members.

(6.48.) SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I can assure the right hon. Gentleman he will hear from me no epithets of personal disrespect, for I am sure every Gentleman on both sides of the House regards with the highest esteem the character and abilities of the right hon. Gentleman. In any comment we make on the conduct of the Government—and the object of my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton in making this Motion has been, in my opinion, to pass a just condemnation on the conduct of the Government for their mismanagement of public business in this House—we speak of the Government as a Corporation; we speak of them as possessing those attributes which have been remarked as belonging to Corporations, both physical and moral, in a definition well known to the House. Therefore, I can speak of the conduct of the Government in this matter without fear of personal offence. Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman has said that all these charges of mismanagement and misconduct are the fruits only of a factious spirit on our part—that it is only by factious and obstructive opponents that the Government are charged with the misconduct of public business. In answer to that, I will call his attention to what is thought of the Government by their own friends—what is said of them by their own supporters. If there is any representative of public opinion which is a more ardent supporter of the Government than another, it is, I suppose, the *Times* newspaper. That paper has counselled the Government to use violence towards the House in order to get out of the scrape in which they find themselves. This is what the *Times* newspaper, the great friend of the Government, says, only two days ago, of the Government and their conduct of public business. I will call a witness into Court whom, at all events, you cannot accuse of factious motives and Party enmity against you. This is what the *Times* says of the action of the Government and of their conduct of public business in the House of Commons—

> "We cannot congratulate the Conservative Party on the position it presents to-day."

Well, that is very true. I do not think that anyone who has watched the proceedings of that Bench for the last week would be disposed to congratulate them on the position they hold to-day. The *Times* goes on to say—

> "Unfortunately, Ministers themselves have been the first to forget the physical limitations under which they work. They have committed the tactical blunder of pledging their reputation to the transaction of an amount of business for which their time and endurance are inadequate."

That is the first and fundamental mistake of the Government—that they have not understood the nature of the business they have proposed or the power of the House of Commons to transact it.

> "We shall assuredly not be charged with having excused or minimised the wilful obstruction offered by the Opposition upon every available opportunity."

I am sure a charge cannot justly be brought against the *Times* of having minimised the misconduct of the Opposition. But hear what it says of you—

> "But we are bound to say that the Government have displayed a want of common prudence in creating needless difficulties for themselves. A Lord Melbourne, with his 'can't you let it alone?' would have been an invaluable adviser at an early period of the Session. The Irish Land Purchase Bill, a large and complicated measure, touching many interests, raising many difficult questions, and certain to encounter the stubborn opposition of a Party whose very existence, political and material, it directly assails, was of itself nearly sufficient occupation for a Session."

*MR. W. LOWTHER (Westmoreland, Appleby): I rise to order. I wish to ask you, Sir, whether the right hon. Gentleman is in order in reading from a newspaper in the House?

SIR W. HARCOURT: Why, the President of the Board of Trade the other day made half his speech from readings from a newspaper.

*MR. SPEAKER: The Rule which precludes the reading from a newspaper has, in accordance with the general feeling of the House, been relaxed of late years. I need hardly say that of late years extracts from newspapers have been much used in the House, though I have not seen the actual newspaper from which an extract is taken produced and displayed so conspicuously as on the present occasion. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would have done better if he had brought an extract from the paper instead of the paper itself; and, doubtless, if he had had the opportunity he would have prepared extracts among his notes.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The fact is, Sir, that my extract, which I have treasured so much, is at home, and this Motion having come on rather by surprise, I was obliged to get this copy of the newspaper, and inasmuch as the right hon. Gentleman in charge of this Bill made a large portion of his speech consist of extracts from newspapers, I thought I might read this extract, and with the leave of the House I will conclude the extract, which is very instructive, and, I think, very true.

> "It ought to have been regarded as a misfortune that the tithe question had assumed a phase calling somewhat peremptorily for treatment in the same Session, but to raise in addition the thorny questions connected with public house licences was a piece of gratuitous rashness, all the less excusable because the present Administration has already had a sharp lesson from temperance fanaticism."

Then, with more comments on the wickedness of obstruction, it goes on—

> "But even in the absence of this extraordinary development the Ministerial tactics would have been rash and dangerous. As things are these tactics have led to a damaging rebuff. Whatever soothing phrases may be employed to describe the arrangements contemplated by the Government, the plain truth is that the Land Purchase Bill was the principal measure of the Session, and that they fail to carry it. We are not concerned to deny that there is a moral difference between dropping it altogether and carrying it forward to next Session as a partially debated measure, though we attach

little importance to moral triumphs accompanied by substantial defeat. But it is not at all clear——"

[*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Well, I will make this article a part of my speech, if you please. It is an agreeable novelty to me to adopt and speak the language of the *Times*. You may take it as my speech, if you please, though I am afraid it is against the Rules of the House to read a speech; but there are only two sentences more that I wish to read.

> "But it is not at all clear that the labour already expended upon the Bill will make much difference in the labour it will require next Session, and in the meantime the broad fact stands out plainly and unmistakably that the principal measure of this Session has failed. That is not a pleasant condition of affairs for the Government or its supporters in any case, and least of all when there are fair grounds for holding that the measure might have been passed in spite of obstruction had not the Government wasted time and energy upon legislation which might have been postponed."

Do not tell us now that criticism of your conduct comes only from factious opponents. That is the language held about you by your strongest supporters in every part of the country. You may read it in any Conservative or Liberal Unionist newspaper in the country. I am sorry my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham is not in the House. If he were I would refer him to what looks like an inspired article in the *Birmingham Daily Post*, to which I commend the attention of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. All the difficulties you find yourselves in are due to your own mismanagement of public business. You have proposed a great measure for discussion—whether a good measure or not—the Irish Land Purchase Bill. You have frittered away the time of the House. Having named as your first Bill a remedial measure for Ireland, the first business you entered upon was a discussion, the object of which was to blacken and defame the Irish Members. Upon that subject a great number of days were necessarily expended. Then you have introduced a number of Bills which you ought to have known would produce the strongest and most violent opposition. An hon. Member on your own side of the House has called attention to the position of Supply. You have spent very few days—10 only—upon Supply. If you are to devote to Supply the ordinary time which has been given to it in former Sessions, you still owe 27 days to Supply, which would occupy nearly the whole of the remaining time of this Session if it were an ordinary one. The Debates on the Irish Votes under a Coercion Act must necessarily be protracted. When the ordinary law is suspended it is inevitable that the Executive Government should be challenged and questioned in a way which is not necessary when the ordinary law only is in force. You have the additional advantage of private Members' days, and yet this is the situation to which you have brought the House and country. Now you come forward at the end of the Session and propose a desperate remedy to cover your own humiliation and mismanagement. You have proposed this Standing Order, which must, of course, be discussed at considerable length. I think that the hon. Member for Northampton was perfectly justified in making this Motion, which he has made with the object of calling attention to the real situation. We told you from the first that we were determined to offer to this Compensation Bill every resistance in our power, and we shall continue to do so. In doing this we believe, and are confident, that we have with us the wishes of the great majority of the people. If you doubt that, you have the means of refuting us. What is the meaning of your dwindling and waning majority? You are forcing this Bill through by majorities which are not half of your normal Party majority. What is the meaning of that? It is that the Members of this House know that the opinion of this country is against the policy of this measure, to which the Government, in a frame of mind bordering upon insanity, have given precedence. We shall oppose your proposals because, in our opinion, they are not the result of due deliberation, but are a hasty and desperate expedient to which you have recourse in order to get out of the mess in which you have involved yourselves. Far from constituting a wise, well-considered, deliberate measure for forwarding public business, these proposals are only an expedient to cover the ignominious defeat of a discredited Administration.

(7.5.) MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I should not have risen had it not been for the remark of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, in reply to the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool, who alluded to the fact of no progress having been made with the Employers' Liability Bill. I ask the House whether during the whole of the Session the Government have made any attempt to place the Bill in such a position that it would come on for Second Reading, notwithstanding that they have been asked to do so time after time. The whole responsibility of not dealing with that question rests with Her Majesty's Government. If two years ago, when they had the opportunity, they had listened to those who had a right to speak on behalf of the organised trades of the country, we should have had facilities offered for the Employers' Liability Bill such as we on this side have offered to the President of the Local Government Board with regard to the Bills brought before the House for the housing of the working classes of London. We protest against the First Lord of the Treasury trying to deceive the country by throwing upon the House the responsibility for the Employers' Liability Bill being withdrawn. We listened to the long statement which the First Lord of the Treasury made, and the impression left on my mind was that it was the first day of the Session, and he was putting before the House the amount of business that could be got through. But let me remind the First Lord what took place with respect to one Vote in Supply. We raised the whole question of contracts, a very important subject. But hardly had the Secretary for War replied—it was a Morning Sitting—when it was found that there was not time for further discussion. The Vote was not taken again until the end of the Session, when there was not time to discuss it. I tell the First Lord of the Treasury now that there are some of us who are interested in this question of contracts, and at whatever time this particular Vote comes on this year, we shall resume the discussion which was burked last year. It is scandalous in the extreme at this time of the Session that these Bills should be put down as though they were to be run through. We are told that they are non-contentious, but that is the opinion of the First Lord of the Treasury, it is not the opinion of the House in general. If these Bills are pressed through we shall be debarred, as in the past, from discussing the serious Votes in Supply. That is the conduct of the Government against which we protest. With regard to the Licences Bill, the Government knew two years ago how much opposition they created by a similar proposal; yet they have flung on the floor of the House a new Bill, and if they find the most determined opposition it is only what they can expect.

(7.10.) MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I was really amazed to hear the defence made for himself by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury. No one has made any personal accusation against the right hon. Gentleman, but when the whole policy of the Government is arraigned, we should have heard something else than this kind of general appeal for the interests of the House and the dignity of the country, which we have heard 9,999 times from the lips of the First Lord of the Treasury. We say that your declared policy four years ago was the policy of expenditure of public money, and simultaneity, and so on, in dealing with Ireland, and in applying to Ireland the same measures as to England and Scotland. You declared, at the beginning of the Session, by the mouth of the Queen, through her most gracious Speech, that you would extend to Ireland a measure of Local Government, and we ask you, when you get up in the House to defend yourselves, why it is that a Bill not mentioned in the Queen's Speech, but hatched by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in connection with his Budget, is pressed forward, while a Bill declared to be the key-stone and corner-stone of Her Majesty's policy, is to be held over to another Session. We ask for an explanation on that point, and how are we met? We are met by the right hon. Gentleman, the head of the Party who consumed 60 days of Government time in 1881 discussing the Land Bill, at a time when Ireland was almost in a state of revolution, at a time when every moment was precious, and at a time when, strongly as we were opposed to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, we found ourselves obliged to continue to vote with them. It is they who, in the following year, spent 19 days in discussing the Closure

—now applied by the right hon. Gentleman every quarter of an hour. It is the head of that Government, and of that Party, who now comes forward and appeals to us with regard to a measure on which the Opposition are united, and upon which the followers of the Government are disunited, as to which there is no demand, and for which there is no agitation in the country. When you have that situation, what does the First Lord of the Treasury do? He gives us a lesson in Parliamentary deportment. We are tired of these Turveydrop lectures. The right hon. Gentleman beseeched us to have regard for the dignity and position not only of this but future Parliaments. Future Parliaments can take care of themselves. The right hon. Gentleman is teaching us our lesson very late. What we say is this: that this ill-fated measure—this ill-starred measure—being introduced out of time, and in the most offensive manner, there is no conduct almost that would not be justified in giving opposition to a measure so conceived. What is the position? I invite the House to consider the high price which the Tory Party have to pay for Liberal Unionist support. I should like to have the opinion of the Chief Secretary on the conduct of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Why is this Bill persisted in? We are told because it is demanded in the interests of the House and the dignity of the country. If I inverted the phrase it would be all the same. The right hon. Gentleman simply gives utterance to a sort of Parliamentary abracadabra, whichever way it is read it will do. I once knew a poet who wrote his verses backwards as well as forwards, and whichever way you read them they were always equally good. Each sentence of the right hon. Gentleman's speeches is in its essence a most admirable piece of literary mosaic. If the first sentence were put last and the last first it would come to the same thing. What is the real reason why the Government are sticking to the Compensation Bill? The real reason is the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I can almost picture the Cabinet meeting in Downing Street after the Chief Secretary introduced his Land Purchase Bill, and conceived to himself the fond delusion that he would be dangling before the House during the months of June, July, and August, and I can fancy his attitude when the Chancellor of the Exchequer came gently down and said, "Oh, yes; but there is a little Bill of mine I want to appear on the stage at Westminster for a brief period to show my Parliamentary dexterity, and how I can manage figures and finance." And then the Chief Secretary may have said, "Oh, yes;"—and I venture to say this is what occurred in the Cabinet—"but my Bill is promised in the Queen's Speech; it is part of the Government Programme; it is the corner-stone of the Government policy; what have we got to do with your Bill?" Then, I suppose, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would say, "Oh, yes; but I have a large Stock Exchange experience, and I know that there is a large number of Limited Liability Companies starting, and a number of people have a great interest in brewing shares and in whisky shares, and it will greatly strengthen and consolidate and cement the Tory Party all over the country if we show these people that we are determined, by means of our Bills, to back up the interests in which so much money has been invested." I have not the smallest doubt that it is due to that attitude on the part of the right hon. Gentleman that he induced the Government to bring in his Bill, and, having brought in his Bill, that he induced the Government to stand by it by the threat of resignation, simply because he did not want to be discredited, as he was discredited in regard to his Van and Wheel Tax. And, then, what is the House asked to do? It is proposed, in order to save four days of Parliamentary time occupied in the Second Reading Debate on the Irish Purchase Bill, to revolutionise the procedure of this ancient Parliament. By what means? To borrow another illustration from the Stock Exchange, by a species of Parliamentary "contango"—that is, the carrying over by Standing Orders, and it is Members of this House who will have to pay the difference. We will have to sit here during the months of June, July, August, and September. And Parliament is to be revolutionised for what? That we may save four days next year of Parliamentary time that have been wasted upon the Irish Land Bill, and that is the sop which the Irish

Chief Secretary gets for being thrown over. That is what the Government are paying for Liberal Unionism, for a manipulative Chancellor of the Exchequer; and, if we are to believe the *Times*, that great newspaper which everybody believes now, they are paying rather dearly. They are obliged to admit that themselves. Their own newspapers admit it; their majority is waning; while the Opposition, I venture to say, is engaged in one of the holiest causes in which Members of Parliament have ever been engaged. We are engaged in resistance to a measure which we believe justifies every word that has been uttered against it. Yet we are besought and implored, for the sake of our dignity, by those who are sacrificing the ancient traditions of Parliament, to pass this Public House Endowment Bill. Who are the true champions of Parliamentary tradition and privilege? Are they the gentlemen who wasted 40 days during the Irish revolution of 1881 discussing the Amendments, or 18 days discussing the Closure Rule of 1883—that Closure which is now applied every quarter of an hour by the right hon. Gentleman who now proposes to revolutionise Parliament to save four days of Parliamentary time —are they the true champions of Parliamentary dignity? Is it to them that the country should look for the way in which Parliamentary business is to be conducted, or is it to the Opposition, who have done nothing in this matter except under the ordinary and usual traditions, to which we always consider we are entitled to look? Supposing we were in a normal state, I hold that the Opposition are justified in considering that they are dealing with a Government which practically puts lies into the Queen's mouth, because that is what it comes to. Session after Session Her Majesty is made to declare her anxiety to deal with Irish government. Session after Session, on platform after platform, there have been repeated declarations of the anxiety of the Government to deal with Ireland in the same way as England and Scotland. Two years ago we had the English Local Government Bill; last year we had the Scotch Bill; and Ireland, the Cinderella of the three countries, is to be left out until some future time, which is not even specified, and Irish Members cannot even get a sight of a corner of the Land Bill, while the Government are passing measures to endow public houses. A splendid programme for the country, truly, a policy of simultaneity and synchronising, and all the other "isings." That is abandoned, and we have now gone in for a policy of pints and quarts and pewters. That is the position of Her Majesty's Government. On behalf of the English and the Irish public, whose votes have been got on false pretences, we would be false to our duty if we did not protest against the conduct of the Government. Even the Tory Party itself is now finding the poison in the wound of Liberal Unionism; it is finding what it is to have a Chancellor of the Exchequer with one eye on the polling booth and the other on the Stock Exchange, who does not hesitate to sacrifice all the traditions of Parliament, every one of them if necessary, to promote a policy that is founded on some of the most sordid considerations that have ever actuated any Government of the day. The position of the Opposition in this matter is clear. The Government have broken every pledge they have made. Members of Parliament find that they cannot get what they are entiled to, namely, a fair and reasonable time for the discussion of matters of importance arising on Supply. The business of the House has always been supposed to be chiefly the voting of moneys to the Crown. That opportunity of stating our grievances has been taken away in order that we may discuss the endowment of public houses. If the Government will only bring forward Supply nobody will find fault with them if they never bring forward legislation. The Liberal Party do not ask or urge them to legislate. The Conservatives themselves do not want to legislate, because they are conservative. There is not in the Conservative intellect any momentum or main-spring for legislation. The true policy of the Conservative Party would be to give the House plenty of business to do in the nature of Supply, and then in the smaller interstice to bring in pretended Bills for the benefit of the working classes and other objects of so-called benevolence of that kind. Business like the Census Bill, for instance, might be up to the Constitutional high-water mark of Toryism—for this reason, that they would only be called upon to pass it every 10 years. Instead of that we have a set of measures of a most contentious and embarrassing kind, measures which have disrupted the solid phalanx of the Tory Party itself; and I, for one, protest against the policy which, while it attempts to lay upon the Opposition the blame for the delay of business, is in reality a policy in itself calculated to embarrass and irritate the Opposition and irritate the country, and which in the end, in my opinion, will find its reckoning day at the poll.

(7.30.) MR. ALLISON (Cumberland, Eskdale): I am very glad that the Adjournment of the House has been moved, because it has given an opportunity for Gentlemen opposite to fulminate against us on this side of the House those charges which they have been constantly bringing against us in the speeches they have made in the country, that we have been in the habit of obstructing the business of the House. We, of course, know that those charges are untrue, and that the position in which the Government now find themselves is due to their own mismanagement, and to the imbecility they have displayed in the conduct of public business. Another proof of that imbecility has been afforded to-night. They might have accepted an Amendment for devoting the money provided by the Bill to the cause of education, instead of for the benefit of the publicans; they might have accepted the suggestion of the appointment of a Committee put forward by the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale, or they might, as another alternative, have dropped these proposals altogether. But instead of doing either of these things, they have decided on going on with the Bill. But I wish to point out that there is another course which might have been adopted, and which ought to commend itself to their supporters. In the personal devotion which is felt by those supporters to the present Government, they might, out of sympathy for the occupants of the Treasury Bench, have endeavoured to place them in a minority, in which case we on this side of the House would have gladly accepted the appeal that would have been made to the country. That is the course I would have recommended them to adopt, and even now I strongly invite hon. Members opposite to come to the relief of the Government by adopting this suggestion.

(7.34.) Mr. MUNTZ rose in his place and claimed to move "That the Question be now put;" but Mr. SPEAKER withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question, and no Member rising to continue the Debate, Mr. SPEAKER put the Question, "That this House do now adjourn."

(7.34.) The House divided:—Ayes 181; Noes 233.—(Div. List, No. 141.)

AGRICULTURAL COMPENSATION PROCEDURE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Channing, Bill to amend the procedure in references under "The Agricultural Holdings Act (England), 1883," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Channing, Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Halley Stewart, Mr. Cobb, and Mr. Francis Stevenson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 343.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LOCAL TAXATION (CUSTOMS AND EXCISE) DUTIES BILL.—(No. 244.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.

Clause 1.

(7.48.) THE CHAIRMAN: I desire to point out that owing to an accident the Amendment of the hon. Member for Brigg (Mr. Waddy), which stood first on the Paper last night, has been placed on the Paper for this evening in its wrong place, the Amendment of the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) having been put in the first position. Therefore it is necessary to take the Amendment of the hon. Member for Brigg first, although that of the hon. Member for Sunderland will come on for discussion at the same time, inasmuch as they both involve the question of giving the County Councils the option of varying the use of the money which the Bill proposes to place at their disposal from the purpose stated in the Bill. If that question be decided in the negative on the Amendment of the hon. Member for Brigg, the hon. Member for Sunderland's Amendment must fall with it. The second Amendment of the hon. Member for Sunderland, and that of the hon. Member for the Launceston Division

(Mr. C. Acland) belong more properly to a later clause. The Amendment of the hon. Member for the Carnarvon Boroughs (Mr. Lloyd-George) is out of order, the question having been practically decided last night. Some other Amendments to the 1st clause relate to later clauses, and therefore will be out of order on the first. I would, however, add that although the Amendments of the hon. Members for Brigg and Sunderland are in order, a good deal of the ground they take up has already been covered by the Debate on the Amendment for Rotherham. The main point to be discussed is whether the money provided by the Bill should or should not be given exclusively for the purchase of licences, and much of that ground has already been covered by previous debate.

(7.50.) Mr. STOREY (Sunderland): Am I to understand that if it be decided on, the Amendment of the hon. Member for Brigg, that there should be no option, my Amendment falls to the ground? Would it not, then, be competent to me to move a third use of the money as a subsequent Amendment? At present the Bill proposes to give the County Councils £350,000 for a certain purpose, £350,000 more for another purpose, and the residue for their own purposes. Will it not be competent to me to move that a further sum of £50,000 or £100,000 should be applied for the purpose of extending the amount of 1d. in the £1, which is at present allowed for the adoption of free libraries?

The CHAIRMAN: If the residue be sufficient to cover the amount so to be allocated the hon. Member might no doubt make that proposal.

(7.51.) Mr. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg): I rise, Sir, to move the Amendment I have placed on the Paper, namely, at the end of line 19 of Clause 1, page 1, to insert the following words:—

> "Or if the County Councils shall so determine, any part of the said sum of £350,000 may be applied in England in relief of the School Board rates, or of the fees payable by or on behalf of the children in elementary schools aided by the State in such proportion as the County Councils may determine."

I have listened with attention to the observations which you, Sir, have made as to how far this is, and how far it is not, a reasonable Amendment, and how far the principle of my Amendment has been anticipated by the discussion which has already taken place. I shall endeavour, as closely as I possibly can, to follow the course which you, Sir, have indicated, and to say as little as possible on that portion of the question which has already been covered. But it will be impossible for me entirely to avoid touching on matters that have already been referred to, for this reason: that we on this side of the House—at all events, the majority of us, some of us expressing our views and others not expressing them in consequence of a certain pact that we have made—the majority of us, I say, probably consider that the whole thing from beginning to end is as bad as bad can be. But I will not pursue this point any further; it is settled and done with; and at present we are in this position: that the sum of £350,000 which is provided for by this Bill is to be taken and allotted, either for the benefit of the public houses, or in some other way, according to one or other of the Amendments upon the Paper. I am sincere in what I have to say with regard to the Government. I asked a question of the leader of the House a short time ago which he would not answer. I did not ask that question disrespectfully, but for the purpose of ascertaining when it was that, in his own mind, he anticipated we should probably rise. The right hon. Gentleman did not answer that question because, no doubt, it was a very difficult question to answer at that time, but now I want to suggest to my right hon. Friend opposite, the President of the Local Government Board, that, after all, the course I am about to propose to him may save the Government an enormous amount of time and labour should they be disposed to adopt it. They are at the present moment committed to a Bill which I truly believe in their own inmost hearts they are very sorry they ever touched, and thereby they are committed to the fighting of principles which they do not like. The differences which have already manifested themselves among the Government supporters on the opposite Benches may be taken as strongly indicative of the views of their own Party; and I put it to the Government, is it not possible that they may take a weapon even from our side of the House? If they were to accept this Amendment it would get them clear of all the difficulty, or of a great portion of the difficulty, which still remains. And I will tell you why, apart from the ridiculous position of the Aldermen on the County Councils, the country generally would, undoubtedly, have perfect confidence in the way which those bodies would administer the powers and duties conferred upon them by this Bill. It may be that in some model districts where there are not too many public houses there would be little need of the exercise of the purchasing power, while there may be many other districts in which the state of things is so bad that a number of those houses ought to be immediately extinguished. What in those cases are the County Councils to do? Each of these bodies is entitled to its proper share of this £350,000, but the major portion of them do not want the money for public house purposes, and are unable to apply it to any other source that would be of real advantage What, then, are they to do? In the division which I have the honour to represent the County Council, although largely composed of the Conservatives of North Lincolnshire, has already actually passed a vote opposed to the carrying out of this Bill. Why then, I ask, are they on the one hand to lose the benefit of the application of this money to purposes of which they approve, and why, on the other hand, should they be compelled to devote it to purposes of which they disapprove? Well, Sir, my Amendment gives the Government the opportunity of saying, "Here is a certain amount of money to be devoted to some purpose;" and I say to the Government, "Do not fasten yourselves so absolutely to the chariots of the big brewers. Give yourselves some opportunity of taking a better course. Give your friends some chance of acting in accordance with their own views." We ask the Government to say that these bodies shall not be compelled to apply the money, as it is not really needed; to say that they are not going to select particular places or to make any particular choice, but that they propose to leave the choice generally to the County Councils, who know best what is most wanted. We ask you, in point of fact, to say that, having created these bodies, having been the means of calling them into existence, you will give them the opportunity of saying to what purpose this money shall be applied, although there can be no objection to the imposition of some kind of limitation, such as, say, for instance, the money shall not be allowed to be used for the purpose of public parks or objects of amusement and recreation, but that it shall be applied to some good and useful purpose. It is for this reason that we ask you to accept this Amendment. The objects I have mentioned will probably, not all of them, commend themselves to hon. Members on this side of the House. I say, however, the Amendment is as good as, under the circumstances, I can undertake to make it, and I ask the Committee to accept it on that principle. I propose that this money shall be given partly in relief of the children's pence. I know perfectly well there are several Members on this side of the House who will say I am simply anticipating free, or rather assisted, education. Some Members will say, "Give all the money to the rates," and others will say, "Do not give any of it to the rates." It is just possible there may be found off the Government Bench a few who think it had better be given to the public houses. With regard to the children's pence, I think the Government had better accept the Amendment. I think they had better not let it be said at the next General Election—which may be adjourned for some time, but which, sooner or later, will come down upon them as surely as fate or death—that when there was a choice in this House between giving the money to drink and giving it to the children, if the County Council desired it, they said, "We will have the drink, the whole drink, and nothing but the drink." I advise them to put away this cup from their lips. The cry they are preparing against themselves by opposing this Amendment will do them great harm, and a perfectly legitimate instinct of self-preservation may induce them to say that, on the whole, they think they had better accept an Amendment like this. The Amendment, if adopted, will not hinder the County Council from laying out the whole of the money, if they like, on public houses. There is nothing whatever in the Amendment which calls upon them to divide the £350,000 into three equal parts and to give one to each purpose mentioned. If the County Council find when they get the money that the best way of expending it, and the most useful for morality and for the people generally, is to buy up licences, there is nothing in my Amendment to hinder them from using it in that way. By accepting this Amendment, all the Government do is to say that the County Council knows better than they do, having local knowledge, how the money may best be spent in their own locality, and being able to deal with the question intelligently, honestly, and fairly. If they refuse this Amendment, it amounts to this: that they are prepared to say to the whole of the County Councils of this country, "We do not believe either in your honesty or your intelligence." I apprehend that will be a very strong thing to say. No doubt, if there has been some previous arrangement which ties the Government to their own proposal in spite of everything, they will have to carry this ridiculous Bill as it stands. We offer them the opportunity of giving the County Councils power to spend on the public houses every single farthing they will get if they think it wise. If the County Councils say they do not want the money for this purpose, why should Gentlemen opposite say that money which is not wanted for public houses should, nevertheless, go to public houses? Supposing that the County Councils say that they do not want this money for enfranchising, or extinguishing, or purchasing, or compensating the licencee of public houses, what follows? Why, we propose that the County Councils, who, it may be presumed, know the wants of their districts, should be entitled to hand the money over in relief of children's pence to people who are absolutely unable to find the money for the education of their children. If there is one thing standing in the way of education in this country and making it unpopular, it is the, perhaps, necessary and inevitable harshness with which the law has to be administered now and then with regard to the poorest of the poor. We are told by a distinguished person in this country that he has a notion of introducing as soon as he can, before his term of office expires—and I am afraid, under the circumstances, he will have to be very quick—something in the nature of free education or assisted education. That will be a bold stroke when it is done, and you must remember that when you have given that stroke you can never retract. You will be taking a leap in the dark of a very serious character, involving an enormous expenditure of money. See, then, what an opportunity this proposal of mine offers you for making an experiment without taking this serious leap in the dark. The opportunity is one that you ought to be extremely glad to avail yourselves of. You can here make an experiment—a small one—in the direction of paying school pence and freeing or assisting education, which will serve to give you experience. The more I consider this proproposal of mine the more am I impressed with the fact that I am the greatest benefactor the Government have ever had. I come to them with my hands full of gifts, and nothing but what theologians call "obstinate impenitence" induces them to refuse these gifts. We heard from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board last night, in opposition to the views enunciated by the hon. Member for Rotherham, his objection to the application of the principle of subvention to anything but a public house. It is said, "The amount you propose to give to education is too small to be of any use." Well, that is a very dangerous proposition to set up, because if it is a very small amount to contribute to children's pence, it is a much smaller amount to give for the purchase of publican's licences. If it is inadequate for the purpose of sending a few children to school, it is very much more inadequate for dealing with the quantity of licences you propose to deal with—so inadequate, in fact, as to lead to the pretty general belief that your true object is not to pass a practical and useful measure for the purchase of licences, but to lay down a principle which will be binding on us and on yourselves. The principle of the Amendment is already in the Bill itself, because, under the 2nd clause, £40,000 is to be applied in relief of school fees in Scotland, and in the 3rd clause a portion of Ireland's share of the duties is to be paid to the Commissioners of National Education. If such an application of the money is good for Scotland and Ireland, surely it is good for England. Why should these distinctions be drawn between the one country and the other? I maintain that this country is not a bit better educated than are Scotland and Ireland; why, then, are you going to subsidise Scotland and Ireland and leave England out in the cold? There has been some talk about money coming from spirits going to spirits; but there is a distinct fallacy in that argument, for money coming from spirits goes to the payment of education in Scotland and Ireland, and I submit that, having acknowledged that principle in the case of those countries, you are bound to acknowledge it in the case of England. If not, you must make out a case for the exception, which, as yet, you have not attempted to do. The measure, as a matter of fact, is purely a patchwork one. Its main object is to give something to the public house keepers, but it has a fringe designed to conceal that object, which is of the most illogical character. If you will not give the whole of this money to education, divide it between the publicans and the children, but do not let it go forth that the one thing dear to your heart is the adequate payment of the public house keeper. Last night the President of the Local Government Board said he objected to giving away money for any other purpose because we have already passed a Resolution indicating that the money is all to be devoted to one object. But there are alternative objects before the Committee; and is it to be said that, whenever alternative proposals are put forward in a measure and the House chooses the first of these, it shall not be competent to go on to the second and propose as a compromise that both objects shall be secured? The only other objection to my proposal is one which it does not lie in the mouths of the Government to make. The President of the Local Government Board last night stated distinctly that there is an objection to handing over this money to a National Council—as was proposed in the case of the Principality of Wales—as distinguished from a Local Authority. His righteous soul revolted against anything that might seem even distantly to savour of Home Rule. I do not think it reasonable, but I can understand the right hon. Gentleman's objection. It is true the Government have not given us National Councils for Ireland, Wales, or Scotland, but there is one thing they have done: they have given us County Councils, and have told us that those bodies are admirably well adapted for dealing with these matters. When the Government first brought in the Local Government Bill, under which the County Councils are now operating throughout the length and breadth of the land, they themselves declared with great effusion and earnestness that this licensing question of all others was the one the County Councils were fittest to deal with, and it does not lie in their mouths to object to conferring the powers I propose on these Councils. We know why they backed out of their original proposal, as they did out of the Wheel and Van Tax and out of their proposals as to sugar; but we say to them, "You have now an opportunity of doing to a limited and tentative extent that which you were anxious to do in 1888. Give to the County Councils—your own offspring, the children of your own bringing up—the very duties and responsibilities which your leading men in 1888 declared that it was a right and proper thing to entrust them with." This proposal is not unreasonable and not illogical. I offer the Government the opportunity of doing this in the interests of temperance. If there is one thing more than another which conduces to temperance, it is a good, sound education; therefore, I claim that my Amendment is in the interest of education, and that such being the case, it should commend itself to the Government. It will please us, as it will be something like a rift in the cloud, and will give us an opportunity of escaping from the consequences of a Bill which, between ourselves, is an abomination. It will be very much to the benefit of the people—which is a thing you care more about than pleasing us. It will be in favour of the County Councils as showing your confidence in them, and, lastly—and this is the strongest reason of all—it will be in favour of yourselves. If this be carried I verily believe that it will disarm the opposition to the Bill from this side of the House almost entirely. I, for one, should be prepared to say that, bad as the Bill is, I would listen to the pathetic appeal of the right hon. Gentleman the leader of the House, who not only urges, but entreats us not to oppose a measure which we believe to be horrible. By accepting my Amendment the Government will take from us the opportunity of saying what we undoubtedly shall say throughout the country in the absence of such an Amendment, namely, that when in the stress of their difficulties we offered them fairly and openly this opportunity of saving themselves from getting entirely in the hands of the publicans and of enabling the County Councils to do something useful with this money, they declined to allow it to be spent usefully, or on any thing which would war with the interests of their pets—the publicans. I do not look at this matter from a Party point of view, although I declare that from such an aspect I wish you would refuse this Amendment, because, in that case, the gain to us would be very great. Already the rift between ourselves and some of our friends who used to work with us earnestly and energetically in times gone by is beginning to close. Already in that section of our Party which has left us there is another rift beginning to manifest itself more and more clearly. Already the consequences of this absolutely insane attempt at legislation has been that you have been flooded with Petitions to an extent almost unparalleled. When you have an opportunity of escaping from your folly you will not seize it. It will be better for us as a Party if you persevere with your Bill, if you continue to bring back to our standard right through the length and breadth of the land hundreds and thousands of men who voted against us at the last Election, but who will never do so again as long as this Bill is not only fathered, but is pushed through by main force, although the force is becoming less and less main force with every Division. You will do to us as a Party more good by pressing forward this Bill than we can do for ourselves by anything we can devise. It will be in vain

for you to talk of obstruction. The country will sanction, and will be delighted with any amount of legitimate obstruction which we can put in the way of the passing of this measure, and we shall put such obstruction in the Bill's way. Behind all your bravado we know what your intelligence teaches you, and I ask you, for your own sake as well as for the sake of the country, to accept this Amendment while there is time.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 19, after the word "mentioned," to insert the words "or if the county councils shall so determine, any part of the said sum of £350,000 may be applied in England in relief of the School Board rates, or of the fees payable by or on behalf of the children in elementary schools aided by the State in such proportion as the county councils may determine."—(*Mr. Waddy.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'or if the county councils shall so determine' be there inserted."

(9.5.) THE SECRETARY OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. LONG, Wilts, Devizes): The proposal of the hon. Member for the Brigg Division is one on behalf of which a great deal might be said on its merits, but the Committee is not now concerned in discussing free or assisted education on its merits. The hon. Gentleman has given the Committee his views on the present condition of the working classes in reference to the cost of the education of their children, and has suggested to the Government that it would be desirable if a portion of this fund could be devoted to purposes of assisting education in the country. Well, the Committee is aware of the fact that announcements have already been made in reference to the question of assisted or free education, and I venture to submit to the hon. Gentleman that his proposal will not go any considerable distance towards relieving the working classes from the difficulties under which they labour in this respect. But I do not propose to discuss the question of free education now. Whether it be good or bad, I look forward to the opportunity Parliament will have of considering the question upon adequate and definite proposals. But I would suggest to opponents of these clauses who are fond of making references to the increasing difficulties of the Government in connection with this measure—statements easily made in regard to this or any other measure—that they should consider their own position. I have a very shrewd suspicion that hon. Gentlemen opposite are getting into far greater difficulties themselves, because, in their extreme desire to attack the Bill, they approach it from so many different points that it is impossible for them to be united, expect in a general spirit of hostility to the Bill. One of the chief arguments advanced against the measure is that the sum of money proposed is ludicrously insufficient for the purpose of extinguishing licences. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) gave us last night the result of some interesting calculations he had made, by which he arrived at the exact sums which he said would be distributed to various districts. But this money is to be spread over the whole country; there is no special share to town or village, forming an unit in the whole area over which the sum is to be distributed. But the contention is, that the money we propose for the purpose is ludicrously insufficient, and, therefore, our proposal ought not to be entertained by Parliament. Well, but surely it is 10 times more insufficient for the purposes the hon. Member for the Brigg Division has recommended. He does not even propose that the whole sum of £360,000 should be devoted to the subject of his Amendment. Even if Parliament were to accept the hon. Member's proposal, and the County Councils were to act upon it, what would be the practical result? In certain parts of the country, in a very limited number of cases, there would be assisted or free education, while everywhere else the present system would prevail. I therefore submit, in the first place, that the money is inadequate for the purposes of the hon. Member, and, in the second place, even were the hon. Member's proposal accepted, it would do very little good for the cause he has at heart, namely, free education. The good it would do would make no real mark on the difficulties; it would only accentuate those difficulties in a great many districts by the relief afforded in a very limited number of cases. The hon. Gentleman said the Government had already proposed to devote a certain portion of this money to assisted education in Scotland; but the hon. Gentleman will remember that distinction has already been made in the case of Scotland in the Local Government proposals passed by the House dealing with Scotland. Everybody knows the conditions of education in Scotland differ from those which exist in this country, and the proposals in the Bill with regard to Scotland make no greater distinction between this country and Scotland than already exists. Does any hon. Member who supports this Amendment ask us to believe that the proposal is really made in the interest of the Bill? ["No."] I am glad to have that admission; it is what I expected and desired. Undoubtedly, the desire of hon. Members opposite is to wreck this Bill. ["No; to improve it."]

SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): Only the Compensation Clauses.

MR. LONG: Of course, I mean to wreck the licensing clauses. We are justified in the belief that the Amendment is directed to the wreckage of those clauses rather than to the improvement of the measure. Our desire is not in that direction. In the course of his speech the hon. and learned Member for Brigg spoke of the want of intelligence on the part of members of the Government; but if our intelligence is to be estimated by our acceptance or non-acceptance of this Amendment, I am afraid we must continue under his displeasure, and be liable to the description he has given. The proposal contained in the Amendment would only have a very partial effect, and would serve no particular end. The money available is totally inadequate to secure the object aimed at by the hon. Member for Brigg. Without saying a word against the principle of freeing the poorer classes from the burden of school fees I must, on the part of Her Majesty's Government, oppose this Amendment, because it is directed against the Bill, and because, if adopted, it would not effect the object which it pretends to have in view.

(9.10.) Mr. STOREY: The hon. Gentleman has indulged in the usual "Pecksniffian" statement that occupants of the Front Bench opposite are burning with anxiety to secure the advantages of education to the poorer people of this country.

Mr. LONG: I said I had no desire to contest in any way the sentiments expressed as to the advancement of education.

Mr. STOREY: Now, I am disposed to test these allegations. Are the Government really anxious for the cause of education or not? Here is a chance—here is a sum of money which is now at the disposal of the Government, or may be, and the Government have the alternative of providing a fund for the endowment of public houses, or of employing the money, or part of it, as my hon. Friend proposes, for the payment of school fees of poor children in our large towns. The hon. Gentleman says the amount of money in question being ludicrously insufficient, as we allege, to endow public houses——

Mr. LONG: No.

Mr. STOREY: The hon. Gentleman surely does not remember what he said. That the amount of money being, as we allege, ludicrously insufficient for the endowment of public houses—for the purpose proposed in this Bill—therefore, it is much more insufficient for the purpose of providing for the fees of poor children.

Mr. LONG: The hon. Member attributes to me a form of words I did not use. I said an argument used by hon. Gentlemen opposite was that our proposal ought not to be accepted, because the money was inadequate for the purpose; and I said that if hon. Members made that a ground of objection to our proposal, then much more did such an objection apply to the proposal in the Amendment. I did not adopt the suggestion that the amount of money is ludicrously insufficient for the purpose we propose.

Mr. Long

Mr. STOREY: Quite so; the hon. Gentleman said the inadequacy was greater in regard to this Amendment. On that I wish to meet the hon. Gentleman with figures. Although the £350,000 will be inadequate for the object the Bill proposes, it would be fairly adequate for the purpose suggested in the Amendment. For instance, the amount to be allocated to the town of Sunderland would be about £1,200 a year, and this, though ludicrously inadequate for the purpose of buying up public houses, would pay the school fees of 1,500 children out of the 12,000 children in Board schools—a number which fairly represents the proportion whose parents require assistance in this matter. So, I say, this sum, paltry as it is, would break the back of the practical difficulty we have in Sunderland, a difficulty, we feel most keenly in bad times, and which is present even in good times. It is a most unpleasant thing for poor parents to go before the School Board, in some instances to go before the Board of Guardians, to plead for exemption from the payment of their children's school fees. All the answer we can give them when they complain is, "It is the law; we have no other method by which you can get relief." But here is a method. The Government have the money in their pouch, and to our request the only answer they will give is that the amount is ludicrously inadequate. I show you an instance in which the amount is not insufficient, and it is my belief that the amount placed at the disposal of County Councils throughout England would be adequate, in many instances, for the purpose we have in view. Let me ask hon. Gentlemen to look at this matter from the point of view and position of a northern artisan. What would be the idea among his fellows if such a man, having an increase in his wages barely sufficient for the maintenance of his family, devoted that increase to such extravagances as that class fall into, instead of devoting it to improving the food and condition of his wife and family? He would be censured for his folly and want of thrift. Yet the Government, with this money at their disposal, insist that it shall be used in a manner that is universally condemned by the working classes. It is to be used in utter defiance of the opinion of all the people concerned. I will not go so far as to prophecy what any particular County Council may do; but I will say, from my knowledge of feeling in the North, and I think other Members will confirm me, that, generally speaking, County Councils will not use this money which is to be forced upon them for purposes such as the Bill indicates. The Government have public money at their disposal, and worthy objects on which to employ it. They know that the object to which they propose to apply it is one with which the County Councils in large districts will have nothing to do, and yet they try deliberately to force on Parliament the employment of the money in this particular direction. For my part, I have been taught ever since I was young that when you get a surplus of money you ought to spend it wisely and worthily, and for the best objects. We do not regard the Government object as a good object, and we consider the alternative objects suggested in this Amendment as more valuable. So much for the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brigg. You, Sir, were good enough to tell me that the particular Amendment which I have suggested was one that must fall with the Amendment of my hon. Friend. I confess I do not quite see why that should be so; but one must not compete with masters of legions, and I, therefore, accept the ruling which, doubtless, in good time you will give. But I hope I shall be in order in explaining that the Amendment I wished to propose was not in antagonism to that of my hon. Friend — it was rather supplementary. It sought to provide that, if the County Councils so determined, the money might be employed for the establishment and maintenance of free libraries and museums. As an argument against the Amendment of my hon. Friend, it might be urged that the County Councils have at present nothing to do with education, although we hope that shortly those duties will be entrusted to them. But it cannot be denied that the County Councils have the right—and the sole right—to deal with the question of museums and libraries. I apprehend there is no Member in this House who would not be willing to see a free library in every town and in every village, and a public museum in all the large centres of population. What prevents that end being attained at the present time is not the lack of willingness on the part of the people, but a lack of funds at their disposal. It may be alleged that on numerous occasions in the past the ratepayers of towns have, on a poll, decided against the establishment of a free library. I confess with shame and sorrow that that has sometimes been the case, and, that being so, I think it is incumbent on Parliament to do what it can to improve the mind of the people on this subject. Still, considerable progress has been made in this matter. I hold in my hand a Return made as long ago as February, 1885, which shows that at that time there were no fewer than 99 places in England where free libraries had been established. Since that date there has been a very large increase in the number of places in which they have been established, and, probably, there are in England at the present time more than twice 99. In Scotland, in 1885, there were only 11 places in which there were free libraries, and in Ireland only four or five, but doubtless in the two sister islands there has also been a considerable improvement. How does the law stand as to the money which the Municipal Authorities may employ for free libraries. They are limited to expending 1d. in the £1 on the rateable value. I never could see why the Legislature should have imposed such a limit, and I think that as the Government have so much superfluous time and energy at their disposal they might utilise it in removing that limit. At present, as I have said, municipalities can only spend 1d. in the £1.

Mr. POWELL WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.): I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member, but I may point out that the sum has been altered in some cases, and notably in the case of Birmingham.

Mr. STOREY: I was just going to reinforce my argument by drawing attention to the case of Birmingham. It is a fact that a few years ago Birmingham, and several other municipalities, by special local Acts, extended the limit of a 1d. rate, and many others would have been, no doubt, as likely to do so had not my right hon. Friend, who is nothing if not extremely accurate in his dealings with the Committee charged with such matters—I mean the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton—induced them to agree with him that none of the Committees dealing with private Acts should in future give to municipalities any power exceeding the powers of a general Act of Parliament. Now, what is the case in Sunderland, which I have the honour to represent in this House? Sunderland, which was one of the first towns in the country to adopt the Free Libraries Act, is considerably hampered by that limit of 1d., and cannot buy the more expensive books they think necessary. A penny in the £1 there produces £1,700 a year. We built out of the rates a very handsome library building, and, after paying the interest on the Sinking Fund and other charges, we are seriously crippled. Our people read the books with avidity, and if the Government would only give us the money they are now going to so vilely misuse we would show what a progressive Radical town in the North can do. The Town Council of Sunderland will not apply 1d. of this money to the purposes of buying up public houses, which they have another way of getting rid of, and the result will be that the Government will be putting this money by in a stocking, and it will be used for no beneficial purpose whatever. We know quite well that we are not discussing this matter for the sake of argument. We do not expect to be argued with. We do not want to be argued with. We know exactly what is being meted out to us. We may argue and we may convince the consciences of hon. Members opposite, but we know that, by-and-by, they will vote us down. For my part, I give the Government fair notice that we shall continue to oppose this Bill. I call the action of the majority in voting us down without argument, brutally un-Parliamentary. By discussion you may take the words of the complaint and condemnation out of our mouths. But you sit still. You listen to what we say; you may think in your hearts that what we say is right, but you add—you supporters of the Ministry add—"We must vote with the Government." If you treat us in this way, I give you fair notice, you shall never get a vote until you compel the Division by the power vested in the Chair. And then, of course, we shall be twitted with obstruction.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

MR. STOREY: If we are twitted with obstruction on these grounds, I shall frankly reply that I have obstructed in this matter, and that I will obstruct. When I once make up my mind, and state a thing, hon. Members know I generally mean it. I have obstructed this Bill, and I will obstruct it by every means in my power, and the Front Opposite Bench have nothing to do with this action of mine.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member must address himself to the Amendment.

MR. STOREY: The proposal of this Amendment is to secure the spending of this money for the education of poor children, instead of for the endowment of public houses, and I was complaining that the Government had not argued this matter. This question was not before the country at the last General Election; it was not even mentioned in the Queen's Speech. So far as we know, the great body of the people are opposed to it, and I think it is the duty of independent Members like myself to force matters until the Government are compelled to go back to the constituencies whom they are so deceiving.

*(9.50.) MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I have no doubt that the hon. Member who has just delivered a speech, characterised by no great delicacy of language, has passed much time in, but has not derived much improvement from, free libraries and museums. In the town I represent may be found one of the best institutions of the kind in the North of England. I wish the hon. Gentleman would have delivered such

a speech as we have just heard before an audience of the working men of that town. I do not think it would have been well received.

Mr. STOREY: I will come whenever the hon. Member invites me.

*Mr. POWELL: If his own political friends will invite him I will do my best to secure for him a fair hearing. He has complained of the inadequacy of the sum at present devoted to the maintenance of free libraries. Now, we have in Wigan a splendid library, the first collection of books being the result of private beneficence. The building in which it is stored was a gift, and yet, notwithstanding that double munificence, the amount of 1d. in the £1 was found to be inadequate; last year, therefore, the borough came to Parliament and the limit was extended to 2d. This is being done by other boroughs year after year, and it is a duty which the Police and Sanitary Committee is frequently called on to perform. Now, there is a Bill before the House, introduced by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London, which has for its object the extension of the limit; and I should like to know what assistance the hon. Member opposite has given in its promotion. Has he used his influence with any of his friends to prevent its progress being objected to after midnight? So long as he remains passive in that matter I think we are entitled to interpret his views on this Amendment in the light of his conduct in regard to that Bill. I wish to see the Bill of my right hon. Friend carried. I wish to see free libraries established throughout the length and breadth of the country. Great progress has been made in the past, and I hope still greater progress will be made in the future. This seems to me to be a dilatory Amendment. It is devised for the purpose, I will not say of wasting time, but of consuming time. I do not think the cause either of free or of assisted education would be strengthened by the adoption of this Amendment. Such a course would have the effect of throwing local funds into confusion. Hon. Members have said that the County Councils in Wales, and in the North of England, will not use this money for the extinction of licensed houses. No prophecy could be more uncertain, and I believe that if the Bill becomes law its provisions will gradually be put in force throughout the country, and that the cause of temperance will be advanced. Much has been said in the course of this Debate on the subject of free and assisted education, but it appears to me that hon. Members opposite only become energetic on this matter when the Government are seeking to push forward their Bills. Now, Sir, I think the House would do well to allow the Prime Minister to develop the scheme he has already shadowed forth. It is only reasonable that, having suggested a scheme on this subject, he should be allowed to give form to it. I do not understand whether the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman opposite is intended to be specifically in the interests of the rates, or of the children, or of the schools; whereas every person who is dealing with the question of education ought to say distinctly and definitely what he proposes to do when he is asking Parliament to devote money for educational purposes, letting us know clearly whether it is in relief of rates, for the benefit of the children, or for the advantage of the schools, as forming part of a great educational institution. Unless you set clearly before your minds the objects for which the money is to be granted, your scheme must be vague, shadowy, and unreal, and must necessarily fail. In regard to the question of rates, nothing can be more calculated to stir up strife than to give County Councils the power of applying public money in aid of the rates for educational purposes, especially where there are two systems of education, which have been, and are, the cause of much difference of opinion. I am sure it is in the interests of education that the two systems should exist, side by side, and that there should be a wholesome rivalry, without which the voluntary schools must perish. But here we have a scheme to enable County Councils to apply money entirely for the School Board schools, without any corresponding aid to the voluntary schools. This is the first time that such a proposal has been made. To adopt such a system would be to inflict great wrong on the voluntary schools, and would be strongly resented by those who have hitherto laboured in the cause of education. It was only the other day there was a chorus of applause from every part of the House in favour of the action of my right hon. Friend the President of the Council, who was then said to be an enlightened man and a pioneer in advancing the cause of education. Now, however, this chorus is at an end, and we are being condemned, as we have been before, for neglect and apathy in regard to the education of the country. Nevertheless, in the course of this controversy we on this side of the House have ever been the first to endeavour to advance the cause of popular education, and I believe we are in the front now. We shall certainly not be deterred from the course we are taking on this subject by the kind of obstacles which are raised by this Amendment. We regard the question of education as our own, we are proud of the work we have done in past days, when we were leading the way in this matter, and knowing all this, and being conscious of our present sincerity, we shall not be deterred from opposing a proposition which we believe to be inopportune in its initiation, uncertain in its results, and calculated rather to hinder than to advance the great work of education.

(10.5.) SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I do not rise to speak at any length on this subject, but I think the House ought clearly to understand the issue raised by this Amendment. The last speaker has made the singular appeal that we should leave this question of education in the hands of the Prime Minister, in consequence of the speech he made five years ago. Well, we all know that when a person takes out a patent the rule is that he ought to give the public the benefit of it, or not be allowed to maintain his patent-right. Considering that the speech made at Newport by Lord Salisbury was made as long ago as 1885, and that nothing has yet come of it, we may, perhaps, be forgiven if we infringe the patent-right of the Prime Minister, and suggest that we can now take out a patent-right for ourselves. The House has, undoubtedly, but contrary to our opinion, determined that a portion of the money or the whole sum provided by the Bill shall, if the County Councils think fit, be applied to the purchase of public houses; but we assert, and I do not think hon. or right hon. Gentlemen opposite will deny the assertion, that a great number of the County Councils will not use the money for such a purpose. You know that the London County Council would not so use it, and that no County Council in Wales will apply it in this way. I think you may also assume that no County Council in Scotland will so apply it, and I may take it, on high authority, that the County Council of Derby will not so use it. Indeed, I doubt whether you will find anyone in this House, if you were to poll the assembly, who would say that he thinks the County Council of the district to which he belongs would use the money for such a purpose. I do not know whether, even in the wilds of Wiltshire and the neighbourhood of Stonehenge, where there are very few public houses, the County Council would be disposed to apply the money in this manner. And I doubt whether, even in the district of the Under Secretary (Mr. Long), where the squires and brewers govern the country, they would give the power to use the money for this purpose. All, however, I ask you to admit is, that there are a considerable number of County Councils who would not apply the money for the purpose intended by this Bill. Therefore, I ask, can there be anything more reasonable than that you should give an alternative to those County Councils who do not like your proposal? Is it rational to say to those bodies, "Here is a sum of money. You shall use it for this purpose. If you do not approve of that purpose you shall not use it at all?" I ask the right hon. Gentleman, the author of the County Councils, is it rational to treat County Councils in this way? Why, Sir, it is treating them with contempt; it is saying to them, "You are no judges of the interests of the community of which you have charge. We have determined what you shall do; we dictate to you a public policy, and if you do not adopt it the money we offer you shall lie idle." Now, the hon. Member for Brigg proposes to say to these bodies, "Here is so much money, we will authorise you to devote it, if you think fit, to the interests of the brewers and the publicans, but you may also devote it to another purpose, should you desire to do so." I have read a good many of the speeches made in the country by the Under Secretary to the Local Government Board, and I may say of him that a more thorough going publicans' and brewers' man I do not know. I think he is a sincerely convinced publicans' man; in fact, a more upright and downright or outright liquor man I cannot imagine. No doubt he is so from profound moral conviction, and, from the language he holds, his belief in good liquor is the foundation of all his speeches. Therefore, I read this Bill a good deal more with the mind of the Under Secretary than with that of the President of the Local Government Board. But I cannot help thinking that this Bill would enable the publican minded man to have it all his own way. What I say is, let the education minded man have his chance. Well, Sir, I want to make it quite clear to the Committee what the issue is on what we are about to vote. The Committee is going to vote on the one side for the public houses, and on the other side for the village schools. That is the point at issue. We demand for the County Councils that they, at least, shall have the opportunity of applying this money to educational purposes, if they think fit. I appeal—not to the Chancellor of the Exchequer; he is what I should call a vested-interest-minded man; he judges of these great moral questions, as we have already been told in witty language, by the Standard of Consols—I am appealing to the President of the Local Government Board, who looks at things from a rather more common sense point of view, who appreciates the fact that there is a Party in this country who prefer the interests of education to the vested interests of the publicans. I ask him whether he will not afford his own children, the County Councils, their own choice between education and liquor. We do not insist on education There are some people who think education is dangerous and mischievous. I believe that in Wiltshire they think it takes children away from the plough and raises wages. These are views which I know are still held in the more enlightened and Conservative parts of the country. But there are places where these views are not held—where the population is large, and the people prefer education. All we now ask is that the County Councils shall be allowed to make their choice. I do not wish to detain the Committee any longer. I am quite ready that the vote shall be registered, and that the country shall understand that it is between the public house and the village school.

(10.16.) THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I am not going to follow the right hon. Gentleman through the whole of his speech. I wish, in one or two sentences, to point out the utter hollowness of the right hon. Gentleman's contention. The right hon. Gentleman has before him the declaration of the Government that next Session—[*Opposition cries of* "Oh!" and "Next Session!"] The Government and their supporters have listened patiently to the rigmarole of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby; they have even allowed him to use most insulting expressions; and the moment there is to be a reply, hon. Members opposite, who are so temperate, cannot control themselves. The right hon. Gentleman knows that the Government are pledged to introduce a measure next Session [*Opposition cries of* "Oh!" and "Next Session!"] I am surprised that it is impossible to conduct an argument with any degree of regularity. The Government are pledged to bring in a measure next year with regard to assisted education, by which fees in elementary schools will be paid; and now the right hon. Gentleman wishes to set up the plea that it is a question between the village school and the public house. The right hon. Gentleman never thought of the village school or of any department of education before the Government introduced the proposals now under consideration. Education is not one of the specialties of the right hon. Gentleman. The village school will be provided for next Session, but the Government welcome the declaration which has been made, because we see that the Party opposite are about to pledge themselves to give £350,000 of public money to elementary schools aided by the State. The Government welcome this declaration, made for the first time by the Liberal Party, of a desire to devote this money to all schools aided by the State, for the Amendment contains no distinction between denominational schools and other schools. The hon. Member for the Brigg Division, in his eagerness to attack the Government and establish a bogus contrast between the public house and the school, has blundered into an Amendment by which he and his Dissenting friends, who are pledged up to the hilt not to give a farthing to denominational schools, propose to give £350,000 to all State-aided schools. Hon. Gentlemen opposite, in their keen desire to prove the wickedness of the Bill, are accepting a principle which they have denounced for years. There will be an interesting Division. Hon. Members on this side of the House will vote for the application of the money to the diminution of public houses—a principle which has been advocated by the Liberal Party generally. On the other hand, hon. Gentlemen opposite will vote for the application of the money to the relief of school fees, which the Government have promised to remit next year; and they will vote for an Amendment embodying a principle which all those Dissenting bodies who have condemned this Bill have protested against with equal emphasis and loudness.

(10.25.) MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): The right hon. Gentleman finds fault with my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby, and says, forsooth, that we are now for the first time showing our zeal for free schools. Yes; but my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby, in 1885, strongly and widely advocated free schools at the moment when the Chancellor of the Exchequer was fighting his election at Edinburgh expressly on the ground of his inveterate hostility to free schools. And yet the Chancellor of the Exchequer taunts my right hon. Friend with inconsistency, forgetting his own attitude on this very question! I was amused to see the Pharisaic air with which the Chancellor of the Exchequer asked the Committee how it was they had any doubts as to the views of the Government, because they had pledged themselves. The House has had a pretty good example to-night of the value of the Government's pledges. They have been pledged for four years to Local Government for Ireland, and yet that measure is put off, certainly till 1892. What security is there that next year, as in the present year, the Chancellor of the Exchequer will not interpolate into the Government programme some measure which is not in the Queen's Speech, and which neither the House nor the country, still less the right hon. Gentleman's followers, expected or desired. No, Sir, we shall certainly vote for the proposal of my right hon. Friend. We shall vote for it without the slightest compunction or idea that we are losing any boon which Her Majesty's Government now find it convenient to offer, but which, judging from the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman himself upon the question, we can have very little confidence will be carried out on the lines we pursue.

*(10.28.) MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): I protest against the Chancellor of the Exchequer's presumption that we are committing ourselves, by the words of this Amendment, to anything like what he pretends. We are merely voting for a principle which is already established in Scotland. However, speaking for myself, I would rather every shilling of this money went into the parsons' pocket than go to the purchase of public houses. On the old motto, "Of two evils choose the least." We think that we are choosing the lesser of two evils. But the words of the Amendment are clear enough. We desire by it to entrust popularly-elected Bodies, namely, the County Councils, with the distribution of this money for the purposes of elementary education. Well, we have no hesitation at all. The vote is between this money going for beer or books, and

I am going to vote for books. I rise for a specific object, and I will say it in as few words as I can, and without giving unnecessary offence. Are you hon. Members going to vote for "beer" with your hands perfectly clean, and are you satisfied that you ought to vote at all on this matter? On Petty Sessional Benches, when there are questions of licensing, members who are connected with the brewing trade leave the Bench. I ask the Government whether they are prepared to tell the House how many hon. Gentlemen on the opposite Benches have their hands steeped in this trade? I have received letters from the west country, on the strength of which I ask for this Return. A letter from a constituent of one of the occupants of the Government Bench says that that Member is interested in a brewery to the extent of £35,000, and is the owner besides of public houses. I hold in my hand another letter from a constituent of a Cabinet Minister, saying that that right hon. Gentleman is a trustee or a director of a large company owning 153 tied houses. Then I challenge the hon. Member for Wigan to say that he has no interest in public houses.

*Mr. F. S. POWELL: If the hon. Member is referring to me, I may say that, as far as I am the owner of houses of that kind, I have always kept them under my own control.

*Mr. WINTERBOTHAM: All I desire to say is whether hon. Members who are interested in property of this kind ought not to act on the same principle as Magistrates, who, when they are personally interested in a question brought before them, leave the Bench. And I do not hesitate to give my own opinion that hon. Members opposite whom this legislation will benefit pecuniarily ought to refrain from voting, and that if they did, this unhappy Bill would be quickly defeated.

(10.32.) Mr. WADDY: I should not have said a word in reply if it had not been for the ill-advised attack made on me by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, with his usual candour, read only the half of the Amendment, and represented it as the whole. Having done that, the right hon. Gentleman was good enough to refer to me as one among a number of Dissenters who are now committed to proposals which they have never hitherto accepted. With an ignorance that belongs, I suppose, to Chancellors of the Exchequer with regard to matters of this kind—although they are omniscient with regard to matters of another kind—he says that the religious body to which I belong passed a certain Resolution. I beg to tell him that the religious body to which I belong never resolved in the direction the right hon. Gentleman indicates, but resolved exactly the opposite. He is entirely wrong in his facts, and is entirely wrong in the conclusions he draws from them. The only other observation the right hon. Gentleman made upon which I wish to make a remark was that we should not pass this Amendment, because the Government are pledged to produce a certain Bill hereafter. In reply to that, I would say that, although the Government may have pledged themselves to introduce a Bill, from our experience of their pledges we have no right to expect that they will fulfil their promise, unless it relates to a measure for the benefit of someone from whom they have a reasonable expectation of receiving votes. They will get no votes from poor children who would be benefitted by free education, therefore we must not be too sanguine of a redemption of their pledges in this regard. We should put no more faith in the pledges of the Government than we do in their power as prophets, when they foretell where they will be or what power they will be exercising next year.

(10.36.) Mr. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): We have had some very interesting arguments from the other side of the House as to why we should vote in favour of the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Brigg Division. We first had an interesting speech from the hon. Member for Wigan, who showed his great zeal for free libraries by refusing to do anything to help them, because, forsooth, a certain Bill that he is interested in has met the fate that many of our Private

Bills have met on account of the 12 o'clock Rule. And then he objects to any of this money going to relieve him of the necessity of passing the Bill, which he is anxious to see placed on the Statute Book. Then we were accused by the hon. Member of new-born zeal in favour of free or assisted education. He said he had not heard much about the matter, but if he will make inquiries he will find that early in the Session an interesting discussion took place on free education, initiated by the hon. Member for Rotherham, on an Amendment to the Address, when the whole of this side of the House went into the Lobby in favour of free education. And the hon. Member also knows that hon. Members on this side of the House have freely expressed an opinion in favour of this money being devoted to purposes of education, instead of being frittered away in the manner proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. There is, I may say, a very strong opinion outside the House that many of the Members opposite who vote in favour of the Government proposals have some very distinct reason for the zeal they exhibit. No doubt the Bill is in favour of the great brewers, and I think that the observations of the hon. Member for the Circencester Division require some answer. I find that a newspaper which represents the brewing interest, amongst other things of a like nature, referring to a new issue of Bass & Co's. stock, £910,000 in 5 per cent. debentures, offered to the public at a premium of £12 for every £100, says—

> "We suppose it will be used like the last debenture issue, that is, in an extension of the London and tied trade. The wisdom of this admits of no argument, and its result is seen in the enormous increase of this trade for the last 12 months."

That is the sort of thing you are doing, that is what hon. Members mean when they talk about protecting "the poor publican's widow and orphans—" building up enormous profits for these large Brewery Companies. It is simply a matter of greasing the fat sow over again in the person of the great brewers. I could almost wish that the Government would pursue its course, because I am firmly convinced it is a course most objectionable to the majority of the people of the country. There will be a time when the people will have an opportunity of pronouncing upon the policy of the Government, and, for our part, we hope that that opportunity will be given as speedily as possible. I have great pleasure in supporting any Amendment which will devote this money to a legitimate and useful purpose, and I believe sincerely that if the Government accept the alternative of this Amendment it will not wreck their Bill, but will prove beneficial to them and to the people at large.

*(10.45.) MR. JAMES ELLIS (Leicestershire, Bosworth): I can speak as to the vast amount of good which can be effected by the utilisation of small amounts of money in our rural districts. I know a case in which £100 a year was left to be spent for the benefit of a village, and where the legacy has been productive of a vast amount of benefit to the locality. But the money to be given to the localities under this Bill is worth absolutely nothing. It is said that there is only one "bottomless pit," but I know of two others in addition to the one ordinarily referred to, and they are war and drink. I hold the latter to be the worst of the two, and I submit that in subsidising it, as is now proposed, infinite harm will result. Your money will be worse than thrown away; whereas, if spent in the manner suggested in the Amendment, it will be productive of a vast amount of good in almost every direction.

(10.46.) MR. RITCHIE rose in his place and claimed to move "That the Question be now put."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Question be now put."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

(10 47.) MR. STOREY (sitting with his hat on): I wish, Mr. Courtney, to ask for your ruling on a point of order: whether a gentleman charged publicly in this House, and sitting on the Front Bench, with having a pecuniary interest in this question should be allowed to vote? I beg to point out that I was prevented from rising to a point of order by the President of the Local Government Board prematurely moving the Closure to end the discussion.

(10.48.) THE CHAIRMAN: It is not a point of order on which I can pronounce. I am unable to ascertain the accuracy or inaccuracy of the statements made.

(10.48.) MR. STOREY: May I point out that the hon. Member for Wigan distinctly said he was the owner of a public house? And I find that under Sections 211 and 212, as I read them, if he had been in a Town Council he would not have been allowed to vote.

(11.0.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 230; Noes 201.—(Div. List, No. 142.)

(11.10.) Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 209; Noes 248.—(Div. List, No. 143.)

(11.20.) MR. STOREY: I rise, Sir, to move that you report Progress, and ask leave to sit again. I do so for the purpose of having the Speaker in the Chair, so that the House may at once be able to consider and inquire into the allegations which were made by an hon. Member on this side of the House (Mr. Winterbotham) during the Debate, and which have been left absolutely unanswered by right hon. and hon. Gentlemen whose conduct was impugned. The allegation of my hon. Friend was that a Member of the Cabinet was directly interested in the liquor traffic, and that another hon. Member (Mr. Long) on the Government Bench, who is conducting the Bill, was also directly interested in it, and that, notwithstanding that, they continued to vote for this Bill. [*Ministerial cries of* "Whitbread" and "Stansfeld."]

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order.

MR. STOREY: Now, Mr. Courtney, how absurd an interruption surely is. When I made that assertion, hon. Members opposite called out the name of a brewer on this side of the House, but has that brewer voted for his own interest? Hon. Members on our side of the House who are interested in this traffic have either voted against your Bill, or they have had the decency to stay away. The Standing Order to which I direct the attention of the House reads as follows:—

> "No Member is entitled to vote upon any question in which he has a direct pecuniary interest, and the vote of any Member so interested will be disallowed."

And then Standing Order, No. 212, is as follows:—

> "By Resolution, 27th June, 1844 (Instruction to the Middle Level Drainage Bill Committee), the Rule of this House, relating to the vote upon any question in the House, of a Member having an interest in the matter upon which the vote is given, applies likewise to any vote of a Member so interested in a Committee."

The question I have to ask——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I have had some doubt as to whether this is a point which should be considered with Mr. Speaker in the Chair—Mr. Speaker has no knowledge of what goes on in Committee—and I have found a reference to an express case. If the matter is considered at all, it should be considered by the Committee itself. It would, therefore, be out of order to move to report Progress, in order that this question should be considered with the Speaker in the Chair.

MR. STOREY: Then I shall simply repeat my Motion, that you do now report Progress, in order that we may consider the question in Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: If I reported Progress the Committee would at once be separated. That is not the appropriate Motion. The Motion, if a Motion is to be made, must be that the vote of such and such a person be disallowed on account of his having a direct pecuniary interest.

(11.24.) MR. STOREY: Then I will go to the root of the question, and move that the vote of the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade (Sir M. Hicks Beach) be disallowed, that the vote of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long) be also disallowed, and that the vote of the hon. Member for Wigan (Mr. F. S. Powell), who informed the House that he is the owner of public houses, shall also be disallowed.

(11.25.) THE CHAIRMAN: Now that the subject has assumed a definite shape, I think I may give an opinion from the Chair. There is authority which expressly bears upon it. The Motion for disallowing the vote which a Member has given in a Division must be made on the ground that that Member has a direct pecuniary interest in the vote. It must be made, as it has been laid down by a predecessor of my own in the Chair, on the ground that the Member has a private pecuniary interest, and one not relating to a question of public policy. I think, on that ground alone, it would be incompetent to make such a Motion as has been made; but, looking at the fact that the action of the County Councils, in respect of the extinction of licences, is not an action forced upon them, but, as has been said, in many cases County Councils would not act upon it at all, the interest which any Member could take in the action of a County Council hereafter is so contingent and so foreign to the direct pecuniary interest contemplated by the Order that I think the Motion is not in order.

*(11.27.) THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): As the hon. Member thought fit to mention my name, I should like to ask him on what authority he did so? I desire to say I have not a single share in any Brewery Company, but that I am the owner of a single village public house which brings me in £20 a year.

MR. STOREY again rose, and was greeted with loud cries of "Withdraw."

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! If the hon. Gentleman has any observation to make no doubt the Committee will be glad to hear him, but it is evident the discussion could not be continued.

(11.28.) MR. STOREY: The observation I wish to make is this. I singled out the name of the Member of the Cabinet because I understood—[*Cries of* "Order!" *and* "Withdraw!"]—I will take my own time. Of course, there is no doubt about the name. It is that of my hon. Friend who made the statement in the House, and no doubt he will speak for himself. As far as I am concerned I say at once frankly that I withdraw what I said, and frankly apologise to the right hon. Gentleman; and I shall only be glad, for the credit of this House and for the sake of decency, if I can have the same opportunity with regard to the hon. Gentleman whom I also mentioned.

*(11.29.) MR. WINTERBOTHAM: I ask the kind indulgence of the House in a matter of personal explanation. I hold in my hand a letter which I had with me when I made my speech. I stated then that I had a letter from a gentleman of repute—[*Cries of* "Name!"]—charging a Cabinet Minister—["Name!"] I am first of all going to tell the House, if hon. Members will allow me, what the letter states. I decline, without the consent of the writer, to give the name; but I shall be happy to show it to any gentleman on the Front Bench as a proof of *bona fides.* Having stated what the charge is I shall accept gladly the word of either of those two gentlemen that the statement is not true, and will apologise willingly for having brought their names before the House. The first charge is, that the right hon. Gentleman who spoke last "is a Director or Trustee, or both, of the firm of Messrs. Agg-Gardner & Co., brewers, Cheltenham." My correspondent mentions the name Sir M. Hicks Beach. The next charge is——[*Ministerial cries of* "Charge!"] I beg pardon; I withdraw the word. [Hon. MEMBERS: "Charge?"]

THE CHAIRMAN: Hon. Gentlemen will be good enough to allow the hon. Member to proceed.

*MR. WINTERBOTHAM: I withdraw the word, and I substitute the word statement. [VOICES: "Allegations."] The second statement refers to my hon. Friend the Under Secretary to the Local Government Board, and it states that he has a considerable pecuniary interest in the firm of Messrs. Robert Long & Co., brewers, Marlborough. I again repeat that I will show this letter to any hon. Gentleman opposite who would like to see it; but I do not think it would be right for me, nor, I think, would hon. Gentlemen opposite wish me, to mention the writer's name without his consent; and I repeat that if my correspondent is in error I shall gladly accept the word of either of those two hon. Gentlemen, and shall gladly apologise for having brought their names before the House.

*Sir M. HICKS BEACH: With reference to the statement just made, I have to say that when my hon. Friend, whom I have known for many years, the Member for Cheltenham, converted his brewery into a Limited Company he asked me, as a personal favour, to become a Trustee. I did so; I am a Trustee for the shareholders of that Company. Yet, if the County Council bought up every public house belonging to that Company, not one single penny would go into my pocket.

Mr. LONG: As far as I understand the assertion of my hon. Friend opposite, it is that I am a partner or interested in the concern of Messrs. Robert Long & Co., of Marlborough. Robert Long, of Marlborough, is my brother; I naturally am extremely interested in him. I am desirous to see my brother's affairs prosper, and to assist him in any way I can; but I am not a partner nor a shareholder, nor am I in any way interested in the concern.

Mr. RITCHIE: I think it right, as an allegation was made in the course of the Debate that my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Local Government Board was more responsible for this Bill than myself, and as his name has been mentioned in connection with this matter, to say that my hon. Friend had no part whatever either in the inception or in the preparation of this Bill, and was not aware either of the Bill or the propositions in the Bill until it was printed.

*Mr. WINTERBOTHAM: I willingly apologise to the right hon. Gentleman for being the cause of his name being brought before the House. At the same time, I desire to point out that my correspondent said "a Trustee or Director, or both," and therefore there is no inaccuracy in my correspondent. If there is any blame it belongs to me. I am sorry [*Interruption and cries of* "Order!"]; but I am bound also to point out that the statement of my correspondent as regards the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board was not that he was a partner at all, but that he had a pecuniary interest in the firm of Robert Long and Co. However, I understand him to deny that he has any pecuniary interest in the firm.

Mr. LONG: I do not know, of course, how far terms may be strained. I am extremely anxious not to mislead or to be misunderstood. I can assure the House that I feel very acutely the uncomfortable position in which I have been placed by this allegation. There is a matter that did not occur to me, and I think I am justified in saying that when my hon. Friend opposite made reference to this matter to me in the House the other day, I understood him then to say that his information was in the direction that I had a large pecuniary interest in a brewery concern. This I denied, and I think my hon. Friend will bear me out that I then told him I wished it were true, that I should be very glad if it were, and that nobody would rejoice more than I should, and I told him it was true that I was a shareholder in a Brewery Company, and did not refer to this matter of my brother, because I did not know it was referred to at all. I have no pecuniary interest in it at all. All I have done to my brother I have done to other members of my family; I have lent him some money. I suppose this is not the first time transactions have passed between relatives of that kind. I think it necessary and right to state this, because it might be said afterwards that I had an interest in having lent money to my brother in his concern. All I can say is that that is the extent of my interest. I have now put the House in possession of the whole information.

(11.40.) Mr. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): The Amendment I have to propose is to provide that the residue of the English share of the Local Taxation Duties should be distributed

> "Among the several counties and county boroughs in proportion to the amounts which the Commissioners of Inland Revenue shall certify to have been received by them in the then last preceding financial year on account of licences granted by them in respect of on-licences of premises in such counties and county boroughs."

I think the Committee would be in a false position if we attempted to discuss this Amendment this evening. The President of the Local Government Board laid upon the Table of the House last night a most important Return showing how the sums appropriated to Local Taxation account were distributed in the last financial year, and that Return is now in the printer's hands. It is impossible to discuss the Amendment until we have this Return before us; and, therefore, I venture to suggest not that the clause should be postponed, that would be a foolish suggestion, but that the words after "fund" should be omitted, in order that the words "hereinafter provided" may be inserted; so that when we have had the opportunity of studying this Return and checking it, a subsequent clause can be brought up to regulate the principle on which this money should be distributed.

MR. ROWNTREE (Scarborough): In order that the question of boroughs may not be prejudiced I would ask that the words be inserted after the word "distributed."

Amendment proposed, to leave out all the words after the word "distributed," in page 1, line 20, to end of clause, and to add the words "as hereinafter provided" inserted.

Amendment agreed to.

Question proposed, "That Clause 1, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

(11.45.) MR. STOREY: I desire to move that the clause be left out of the Bill. I do so for several reasons, some general and some specific in their nature. I do so, first of all, on the general ground that the Government received from the country at the General Election no authority to deal with this question. They are creating a precedent and establishing a principle which, though the pecuniary dimensions of the present measure may be slight, will ultimately involve the country against its will in a large expenditure of money. Besides, the country has not even had a few months in which to consider this important question. If the Bill is considered of such extreme importance, surely the Government might have done the House the honour of mentioning it in the Queen's Speech; but for the first time in the history of recent Parliaments it is found that, whereas the Speech from the Throne mentioned several important measures, in this case the attention of the House is forcibly directed to a question which has not been mentioned therein, and the other important measures which have been mentioned are set aside. I believe that the people of the country, by an enormous majority, are dead against this measure; and I deny the moral right of this Government to force such a Bill through the House of Commons in face of the expressions of public opinion against it. We do know something of public opinion on the subject, for this is not the first time the Government have proposed some such measure as this, not the first time the Government have tried to benefit their friend the publicans. A similar attempt was made in 1888, and we know how public opinion went then. Public opinion, so far as we have had opportunity to judge, has not changed. We see this in the Press, in public meetings, in Petitions to this House. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board has told us that people who have signed these Petitions do not understand the precise points of the question as to which they sign the Petition; and, if I mistake not, he, or one of the right hon Gentleman's colleagues, said this in reference to the great Wesleyan Body.

*MR. RITCHIE: I do not think I ever referred to Petitions. What I did refer to was the passing of resolutions, and it was on the terms of these resolutions I made the statement.

MR. STOREY: I have looked through a considerable number of Petitions, and, in my judgment, the gentlemen who prepare and sign them understand precisely the points upon which they appeal to the House. The Primitive Methodists, for example, recently held a meeting at Sunderland, and discussed the Bill. They sent a Memorial to Parliament representing 190,000 members, more than a quarter of a million of adherents, and 1,000 ministers, protesting against the proposals of the Government to pay takes for withdrawing licences from public houses. That Petition seems to be very much to the point. ["No."] Not to the point?

*MR. RITCHIE: No.

MR. STOREY: The Bill does not pay public money for the withdrawal of licences? Well, I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman means to trip me up on some purely technical term——

*MR. RITCHIE: No; I have no wish to do that. I only want to make myself understood. The hon. Gentleman will observe the expression "compensation for licences withdrawn." I only want to be understood. I do not mean a merely technical objection—the expression seems to imply that a licence being refused, compensation would be given, whereas when licences are withdrawn by the Licensing Authority the publicans have no title to compensation or any payment under the Bill.

MR. STOREY: The right hon. Gentleman is quite right; mine was not the proper way of putting it, but I have made reference to the resolution I was referring to, and I find that the Primitive Methodists in this resolution, which I find represents the opinion of some 195,000 members, and 580,000 adherents, protest against the

> "Payment of public money for the extinction of licences which are only granted for a year, believing, as we do, that to create a property in licences is unjust to the tax payers."

Here, then, it is evident there is no misapprehension of the proposals in the Bill. Indeed, it is not easy to deceive the people of this country on public questions of this character. You may do it for a week, I have known a Government do it for a month, but the natural shrewdness of the people soon discovers the truth. The right hon. Gentleman tried to make out a case in opposition to our statements of the result of public meetings, and gave instances of votes being carried at public meetings in favour of the Government proposals. He referred to Gateshead, a borough I know pretty well—and let me say of Gateshead, as of other towns, that I should not be surprised if votes were carried at public meetings in favour of the Government, knowing, as I do, the conditions that obtain in large towns, and the number of persons interested in the licensed victuallers' trade. We, the opponents of this Bill, engage the largest hall in the town, and invite free attendance without tickets; naturally, the trade is interested. But what are the methods employed by the drink traffic to get a vote in favour of the Bill? In Sunderland, for instance, when a public meeting was called by the Mayor, a circular was issued among the licenced victuallers, saying—

> "Being a member of the trade, your presence, with four or five other friends, is most particularly needed. . . . . . You will have no difficulty in inducing four or five, or even more, of your customers and friends, to accompany you and vote for your just claim to compensation."

That is the great meeting to which the right hon. Gentleman referred, and at which the *Times* and other newspapers stated that opinion was pretty evenly divided, whereas the Mayor declared that the resolution against the Bill had been carried by a large majority.

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Thurdsay.

TRAMWAYS ORDER IN COUNCIL (IRELAND) (SOUTH CLARE RAILWAYS) BILL.—(No. 301.)

Bill read a second time, and commited for Thursday.

ELECTORAL DISABILITIES (NAVAL, MILITARY, AND POLICE) BILL.

(NO. 146.) COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

(12.5.) MR. T. M. HEALY: This is a Bill in which a number of us take a great deal of interest. Now, the Government say that they are anxious to facilitate the business of the House. Will they agree to refer this Bill to a Select Committee, so that its scope may be widened? The right hon. Gentleman has promised to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Chelsea, but there are a number of other questions of a somewhat technical nature which will have to be raised. This is not a contentious Bill; and I hope that this suggestion of mine will be adopted.

(12.6.) THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): This Bill was brought in at the request of hon. Members on both sides of the House, in order to deal with a great hardship. The necessity for it has also been called to my attention by many Revising Barristers. A discussion on it at this stage would be quite out of order; but I would suggest that, by acting in concert, the difficulty may be overcome in a way which would obviate the necessity of acting on the suggestion of the hon. Member.

(12.7.) MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the Government go further than they are doing in accepting the Amendment of the hon. Member for Chelsea? If not, I must object to further progress.

Committee deferred till Thursday.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS BILL.

(No. 154.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS.

Copies ordered—

"Of the Parliamentary Proceedings Adjournment Bill (Session 1848), of the Parliamentary Proceedings [Lords] Bill (Session 1869), and Extracts from the Reports of Select Committees relating to such proposals."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Copies presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be Printed. [No. 233.]

MOTIONS.

COUNTY COURTS ACT (1888) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Milvain, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Practice of Registrars and other Officers of the County Court, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Milvain, Mr. Gully, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, and Sir Albert Rollit.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 334.]

GERMANY AND AFRICA.

On the Motion for adjournment:—

(12.15.) MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield): I wish to ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the importance of the despatch to Sir E. Malet issued to-night, he will cause a map to be placed in the Library, showing exactly the limits of German influence in East Africa, and the territory to be acquired by this country?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I am sure the Secretary of State will be glad to have a map placed in the Library; but I should not like the House to assume that all the territories that are to be placed under the sphere of influence of this country are at present in the German sphere. The agreement provides a delimitation of the respective spheres, and for the most part deals with regions not hitherto defined.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I hope the map will explain what a sphere of influence is.

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 18th June, 1890.

Mr. SPEAKER was in his place shortly after 12 o'clock, but there was not a sufficient number of Members in attendance to form a quorum. At 12.22 attention was called to the fact that 40 Members were not present. After the usual interval, Mr. SPEAKER counted the House, and found that 40 Members were present.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

HERRING FISHERY (SCOTLAND) ACT (1889) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 196.)

Lords Amendments to be considered forthwith; considered, and agreed to.

DIRECTORS' LIABILITY BILL.—(No. 300.)

CONSIDERATION. ADJOURNED DEBATE.

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to the Bill [11th June], on consideration, as amended.

And which Amendment was, in page 1, line 22, to leave out the words "of fact."—(*Mr. Edmund Robertson.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words 'of fact' stand part of the Bill."

Debate resumed.

*(12.30.) MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): If the House will look at the Bill, I think it will be found that the introduction of the words "of fact," in Clause 3, makes the Directors personally liable for inaccurate and misleading statements, but imposes a limitation upon their defence that is not contained in the liability itself. In other words, the defence is less extensive than the liability.

Question put, and negatived.

*(12.32.) SIR R. LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.): I beg to move the Amendment which stands in my name on the Paper, namely, to insert after the word "fact" in Clause 3, page 1, line 22, the words "in the prospectus or notice." I would point out to the House that the Amendment must be taken in connection with another Amendment which comes in later on, and to which it would probably be out of order to refer at any length now. The object of the Amendment is to relieve Directors and others responsible for the issue of prospectuses from the liability which might otherwise attach to them for the appearance of untrue or misleading statements or memoranda incorporated in such prospectuses in a case where the untrue or misleading nature of the statements is not material or relevant to the undertaking of the company. As the clause has come down to the House from the Grand Committee, it appears that a Director or any other person who allowed his name in any way to be connected with a prospectus would be responsible for the statements contained or even referred to in it, and that his whole fortune and reputation might be at stake, even in cases where a company is floated in a legitimate and proper manner for developing the resources of India or the colonies or any foreign country remote from England. In such cases it is manifest that the Directors and others who are responsible for the issue of a prospectus must frequently, to a large extent, rely upon documents and official statements published in India, Australia, or elsewhere, where the property is situated. They must very often rely upon the statements of local experts, and the object of my Amendment is this: that while the Directors and others shall rightly be held responsible for any statements which they actually quote which are relative or material to the matter dealt with, it would be absurd to make them responsible for every immaterial statement which may appear in any obscure corner of any report or memorandum quoted or referred to which may have nothing whatever to do with the property which is being dealt with, and which the utmost care of a

Director would not enable him to check in every minute particular. I think it would be improper to lay down that every person who attaches his name in any way to a prospectus issued by a company should be liable to the terrible extent provided by this Bill.

*MR. WARMINGTON (Monmouth, W.): I rise to order. The question of the liability of Directors has already been discussed and decided. The question now for consideration is the defence which a Director may have to offer.

*SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: Quite so. The point which I am now raising is that this Amendment is necessary in order to extend the defence of the Director. Of course, I am in the hands of the House.

*MR. SPEAKER: I think the hon. Member is out of order.

*MR. G. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.): The effect of the Amendment is to limit the defence. Surely, the hon. Member cannot mean that.

*SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: In deference to your ruling, Sir, I will withdraw the Amendment.

(12.38.) MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth): I have now to move, in line 22, at the end of Clause 3, to insert "or other person named therein." The addition of these words, which apply to the authenticity of a statement, will become more apparent when we come to consider the next clause.

Amendment moved, in page 1, line 22, after the word "expert," to insert the words "or other person named therein."—(*Mr. Kimber.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*(12.40.) MR. WARMINGTON: I am sorry that I am unable to accept the Amendment. A Director has no right to use information supplied by a person who is not in a position to give accurate information.

*(12.41.) MR. G. OSBORNE MORGAN: The Amendment of the hon. Member is far too vague, and would make nonsense of the clause. It would justify the issue in a prospectus of information obtained from a person picked up in the street.

(12.42.) MR. E. ROBERTSON: The scheme of the Bill is that you are to be responsible for every statement you make unless it is a statement made upon the authority of an expert. What my hon. Friend opposite asks is that a Director is to be responsible unless he has made the statement on the authority of anybody else.

MR. KIMBER: The answer is——

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has no right to reply. Does he press the Amendment?

MR. KIMBER: No, Sir.

*(12.43.) MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): I confess the words the hon. Member proposes to add seem to me vague, and might be misleading.

*(12.44.) THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I quite agree that the words proposed by my hon. Friend behind me could not possibly be admitted into the Bill. I think the question will be more properly raised when we come to Sub-section B.

*SIR R. FOWLER (London) gave an explanation of what Mr. Kimber had said.

(12.46.) MR. SALT (Stafford): I think the words proposed by my hon. Friend are too wide. It should be upon the authority of an expert or of some person duly qualified to give the information. If at any time this Bill should become an Act, I am afraid that the word "expert," taken in its most narrow sense, might be very inconvenient. If it is to be taken in a wider sense it ought to be so defined.

*(12.47.) SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: Will it be in order to substitute for the words "person named therein" the words "other reasonable authority?" It seems to me that some words of that kind are needed in order to extend the definition of the clause. The term "expert," in one of its meanings, is well understood. He is recognised as a person who understands the subject upon which he writes; but I hope the hon. and learned

Member in charge of the Bill will see the necessity of defining in some way the larger meaning of the term. Perhaps he will consent to the re-committal of the Bill in order that the point, which is an extremely important one, may be threshed out.

MR. KIMBER: I propose to withdraw the Amendment and to submit another which will meet the difficulty.

(12.48.) MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): The words in Sub-section B appears to have been overlooked. The defence will only be available, if it can be shown that the Directors believed that the report as to value was made in good faith, and that the person making it was competent to give an opinion—in other words, that the person making it was an expert.

*(12.50.) MR. KELLY (Camberwell, N.): I would ask the hon. Member for Wandsworth (Mr. Kimber) not to press the Amendment. The object of the Bill is to put an end to a system under which Directors are able to evade their liability. In my humble judgment anything that tends to fritter away their liability under this part of Clause 3 would be mischievous.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

(12.51.) MR. KIMBER: I beg leave to move, instead of the Amendment which I have just withdrawn, the substitution of the words after the word "expert," "or any person, firm, or authority whose name, address, and description are stated in the prospectus." In that case all persons, before they subscribe, would know exactly the authority upon which the statements contained in the prospectus were made.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 22, after the word "expert," to insert the words "or of any person, firm, or authority whose name, address, and description are stated in the prospectus;"—(*Mr. Kimber.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I rise to a point of order. I want to know whether this Amendment is not absolutely identical with the one which we have just decided.

*MR. SPEAKER: There was no decision on the first Amendment; it was withdrawn.

*MR. BARING (London): I think the Amendment is much too wide. What is wanted is that the Directors shall have made all reasonable inquiry and examination and should have had reasonable ground for believing the statements made to them. If they make statements on the authority of somebody else, that somebody else ought to be quoted and ought to be an expert.

*(12.55.) SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: The Amendment clearly proposes to put before the investing public the exact authority upon which a particular statement is made. It is proposed that not only the name, but the address and description of the person, or firm, making the statement should be given to the public, who will thus have an opportunity of ascertaining for themselves what the weight of the authority quoted in the prospectus is. I do not see why the whole responsibility should be thrown upon the Directors personally. If they give the name, address, and description of the person who supplies the information, they will afford the public every facility for ascertaining its authenticity for themselves. That is, I think, all that in fairness can be demanded.

(12.56.) MR. ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I trust that the House will do nothing to weaken the responsibility of Directors, who are sometimes composed of a noble Lord, with one or two hon. Members of this House, and an hon. Gentleman who has spent most part of his life in India or some other distant part of the world, and who, on returning to this country, joins a company solely for the sake of the fees, knowing absolutely nothing about the business he undertakes to direct. I am afraid that if this Amendment is carried it will do a great deal to destroy the good that is contained in the Bill.

(12.58.) SIR G. CAMPBELL: I agree in substance with the remarks of the hon. Member, and also in the conclusion which he has drawn. At the same time, it must not be forgotten that a person who has returned to this country from India or from some other distant quarter of the globe has often a good deal of spare time upon his hands.

(1.0.) The House divided:—Ayes 27; Noes 116.—(Div. List, No. 144.)

(1.11.) Mr. HANBURY (Preston); I have an Amendment to propose at the end of line 27, in Clause 3, and it is to insert the words "and not misleading" after the word "true." These words are, I think, necessary if we wish to make sense of the clause. We have substituted the word "true" for the word "inaccurate" in line 18, and we also draw a broad distinction between a statement which is untrue and one which is misleading. This proviso says that although the Director may have made a statement which is untrue or misleading, yet if he can show that at the time he made it he had good grounds for believing it to be true, he shall not be held responsible. Having drawn that distinction, I think we ought to add the words I have suggested. If a man makes a misleading statement he ought to be called on to prove he did not think it to be misleading at the time he made it.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 27, after the word "true," to insert the words "and not misleading."—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*(1.12.) Mr. KELLY: I would suggest that the words should be "not intentionally misleading."

(1.13.) Sir H. DAVEY (Stockton): I opposed the introduction of the word "misleading" last Wednesday, but was not successful. I agree, however, with my hon. Friend that, in order to make this clause consistent, some such words as he suggests should be inserted. I think this object would be better obtained by using other words. Whether a prospectus is misleading or not is a fact to be ascertained. A Director may not believe it to be misleading, and yet he would come under the law. I would, therefore, suggest the addition of the words "and the same was not calculated to mislead."

Sir G. Campbell

(1.14) Mr. HANBURY: I will withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 27, after the word "true," to insert the words "and the same was not calculated to mislead."—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*(1.15.) Sir ROPER LETHBRIDGE: I must move as an Amendment to the Amendment, the insertion of the word "that," so as to make it read "and that the same was not calculated to mislead." It seems to me to make a great difference, as we want to secure it shall be the Director's belief that the statement was not calculated to mislead.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, after the word "and," to insert the word "that."—(*Sir Roper Lethbridge.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'that' be there inserted in the proposed Amendment."

(1.16.) Mr. KIMBER: He has to prove it was not calculated to mislead.

*Sir ROPER LETHBRIDGE: No.

Mr. KIMBER: No man ought to be bound to prove a negative. He may prove what was his belief.

*(1.17.) Mr. TOMLINSON: I think the word "that" is necessary to make the clause clear.

(1.18.) Mr. COURTNEY: It really makes no difference. I think the clause will accomplish its object. The sub-section provides that unless the Director proves he made reasonable inquiry, and had reasonable ground of belief that the statement was true, and was not misleading, he may be held liable.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: I entirely concur. I do not see how one can get out of that construction of the section.

*(1.19.) Sir ROPER LETHBRIDGE: Of course, if the interpretation given

by the Chairman of Committees is accepted, I am quite content. But I do venture——

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N): I rise to a point of order. Unless the hon. Gentleman is going to withdraw the Amendment he is not entitled to make a second speech.

*MR. SPEAKER: I understood the hon. Member was explaining his reasons.

*(1.20.) MR. G. OSBORNE MORGAN: The question is not what any Member of this House may think the right construction but what will be the view taken by a Court of Law. Although the construction of my right hon. Friend is, no doubt, right, I think it would be better to insert the word "that."

*(1.21.) MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Oldham): What is the opinion of the framer of the Bill? Does he accept the interpretation of the Chairman of Committees? A question may be raised in a Court of Law as to whether a Director is liable not for his belief, but for some fact as to the misleading character of which he could possibly have no information. Our object, as I understand it, is to make a Director answerable for anything in the way of foul play on his part; therefore the words of the clause should be distinct. Will the framer of the Bill tell us in what way he intends the clause to be interpreted?

*(1.22.) MR. WARMINGTON: I think the view of the Chairman of Committees is correct, and that it will be quite sufficient to add the words after "true," "and not misleading."

Question put, and negatived.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. HANBURY: I withdraw the words "the same was not calculated to mislead." It seems to be the general opinion that the original words are more desirable. I, therefore, propose to use the words, "and was not misleading."

*(1.24.) SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE: Does the framer of the Bill agree, then, that the clause means the Director believes it is not misleading?

*MR. WARMINGTON: Certainly.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 27, after the word "true," to insert the words, "and was not misleading."

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

(1.25.) Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 2, after the word "valuation," to insert the words, "or certificate or other document."—(*Mr. Kimber.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It seems to me it would be rather dangerous for the House thus to extend these words.

*(1.26.) MR. WARMINGTON: I cannot accept the Amendment. The report or valuation of any engineer, or valuer, or accountant, or expert, sufficiently cover all that is necessary, and to add the words suggested in the Amendment would simply fritter away the whole force of the Bill.

*(1.27.) SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE: Will the clause as it stands cover such a case as the quotation of an Official Report to a Colonial or the Indian Government? These Reports are frequently quoted, and, certainly, they cannot be said to come under the category of Reports of engineers, valuers, accountants, or other experts, yet I do not see why they should not be equally privileged. Surely they should all be on the same footing. I hope my hon. and learned Friend will accept the Amendment.

*(1.29.) MR. G. OSBORNE MORGAN: I do not think the words of the Amendment would cover the case of such documents.

MR. COURTNEY: I should like to call attention to a point that occurs to me as one deserving of consideration in regard to this matter. Sub-Section A of the clause says—

> "Unless he proves with respect to every such inaccurate or misleading statement of fact, not purporting to be made on the authority of an expert."

Now, suppose an untrue or misleading statement does purport to be made on the authority of an expert, where is that placed? Is it supposed to be under Sub-section B? I think not. Sub-section B says—

"From any Report, or valuation of any engineer, valuer, accountant, or other expert, that it was a true and fair statement of or extract from the Report or valuation."

But it might be made in any other form, and I think we cannot say that Sub-section B extends to everything not covered by Sub-section A. I should have supposed Sub-section B would have said, "With respect to every statement or extract purporting to be made on the authority of an expert," and so forth. In that case it would prove entirely valid. I cannot see that there is any liability on the part of a Director who makes an untrue or misleading statement which purports to be made on the authority of an expert. I should like to know what the hon. Member in charge of the Bill thinks on that point.

*(1.32.) MR. WARMINGTON: I am bound to say that the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman would be an improvement. Would it not be well to let Sub-section B run in this way: "With respect to every statement or extract purporting to be made on the authority of any engineer, valuer, accountant, or other expert." That would carry out the meaning of the suggestion just made, and I wish to ask the hon. Member opposite whether he will withdraw his Amendment and consent to the substitution of these words?

MR. KIMBER: I should be glad to withdraw my Amendment in favour of that suggested by the hon. and learned Member; but I shall then propose after the word expert to extend the protection of the clause to documents or statements made by persons other than experts.

(1.33.) Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 2, to leave out the words "a statement of, or an extract from, any Report or valuation," and insert the words "made on the authority."—(*Mr. Warmington.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

*SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: I may say that I do not see any great difference between what appears in the clause and what is proposed by the hon. and learned Gentleman; at the same time, I think that an Amendment which does alter the whole tenour of a very important and material clause ought hardly to be sprung on the House in this sudden fashion? I think the hon. and learned Member should give the House a little further information and explanation of what would be the result of this Amendment, and that it really demands from the House a little more consideration than has yet been accorded to it. I would add that in this, as in several other respects, the Bill appears to have come down from the Standing Committee in rather a chaotic condition. I would suggest that the hon. and learned Gentleman should move in the interests of his own profession the reconsideration of the Bill, so that it may be presented to the House in a form in which it may be planned to stand permanently, or, at any rate, in such a form that the House will be in a position to adjudicate on questions such as this. It is, I think, a little too much to ask us to accept an alteration in the wording of an important part of the clause, under the circumstances, like the present. I repeat that I do not, on the face of it, see any great difference between the Amendment now proposed and the words that already appear in the clause. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen laugh, but there may be certain pitfalls in these legal phrases which we who are outside the mystic circle of the law cannot at the moment comprehend. The House will probably admit that a lawyer will see dangers and pitfalls which an ordinary layman would not be able to recognise. I can hardly trust my own judgment in this matter, and should like to have the opinion of the hon. and learned Member for Stockton, as well as of other Members of the House, who are recognised authorities on such questions, as to what would be the precise effect of this Amendment, which, whether important or not, is clearly, on the face of it, a proposal to effect a considerable alteration in an important clause.

*MR. S. WILLIAMSON (Kilmarnock): I think the meaning of this Amendment so clear that it might almost be understood by a child, and, for my part, I shall give it my support.

*(1.36.) SIR R. FOWLER: I only rise to say that this Bill, as I suppose, received consideration upstairs, and no doubt there are advantages in the discussion of such matters in Committee rather than in the House; but as the House decided to send it to a Grand Committee, by whom it has been dealt with, and then considered by the House, with you, Sir, in the Chair, I can hardly concur in some of the remarks of my hon. Friend.

*MR. G. OSBORNE MORGAN: I would point out to my hon. Friend opposite that it is rather unwise in him to refuse this Amendment, because it distinctly tends in the direction for which he is contending.

*MR. TOMLINSON: I earnestly hope the Amendment will be accepted, as I think it will be an improvement on the Bill as now framed.

*MR. J. M. MACLEAN: I would point out that the words "report or valuation," which the hon. and learned Member proposes to omit, occur again and again in the clause, and I would ask whether he proposes to leave them out altogether; because it seems to me they are important words to retain. Moreover, the substitution of the words "made on the authority" seems to me to have a very wide scope. We are here legislating to prevent Directors from being parties to misleading statements, and we ought, therefore, to be very clear that the language of this Bill is not in itself misleading. I should be glad if the hon. and learned Gentleman will tell us how he proposes to amend the subsequent portion of the clause.

MR. SALT: I would remind the House that we have got to the word "valuation" in line 2 of page 2, and we are now asked to go back to the beginning of the whole line, a step which ought not to be taken without good or special reason. With regard to the hon. and learned Gentleman in charge of the Bill, I have only to say that being in charge of the measure, there is no one more capable of explaining it; but I think that in regard to such an Amendment as this, he ought to give us a clear and distinct statement as to what it is intended to do, not only in regard to this part of the clause, but also in relation to the subsequent portions of the Bill. There can be no doubt that the Bill is an extremely difficult one to deal with, and any hasty and ill-considered Amendment might have consequences very different from those for which the measure is designed. I would also remind the House that it passed its Second Reading with little, if any, discussion, not only as to details, but also in regard to principle. It was then sent upstairs to the Grand Committee, where it is said to have been thoroughly thrashed out; but the result of that thrashing out appears to have been that it has now become necessary for the House to thrash it out on the Report, when, instead of following the rule appertaining to Committees of the whole House, hon. Members interested in the measure can only speak once. The result is that there must necessarily be a great deal more speaking by more hon. Members and more points raised than would otherwise be the case, because it is not in the power of those who best understand the Bill to follow up their remarks on any one point. No doubt, the objects of the Bill are exceedingly good, and I, for one, do not wish to oppose the Amendment proposed by the hon. and learned Gentleman in charge of the measure; but I do hope that, with the permission of the House, he may have the opportunity of explaining what will be the effect of this Amendment if it be inserted.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I confess, Sir, that, in my opinion, the hon. and learned Gentleman in charge of the Bill was a little premature in accepting the Amendment suggested to him by the Chairman of Committees. What, I ask, was the shape in which this Bill was sent down by the Standing Committee? It was that under the latter portion of Clause 3 a Director was to be liable, on the one hand, to pay compensation unless he could prove one of two things, either that he had made, in respect to any untrue or misleading statement not purporting to be made on the authority of an expert, reasonable inquiry and examination, or that he had reasonable ground to believe, and did believe, at the time of the allotment of shares, that a statement purporting to be an extract from a Report or valuation of an expert was true, and was made by the expert whose name it bore, and further, that the Report or valuation was made in good faith, and that the person making it was competent to make it. Now, Sir, the hon. and learned Gentleman in charge of the Bill, in response to a suggestion made by the Chairman of Committees, proposes to leave out from line 2, page 2, the words, "A statement of or an extract from any Report or valuation." I would point out that a "Report or valuation" is a tangible thing, and that it makes a difference if we alter this Sub-section by striking out these words, and merely inserting in their place the words "made on the authority." I think the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Monmouthshire (Mr. Warmington) ought to tell us how, in proposing to leave out the words I have quoted, he intends to frame the rest of the clause.

Sir H. DAVEY: I think, if my hon. and learned Friend persists in accepting the Amendment suggested by the Chairman of Committees, the result will be to throw the clause into inextricable confusion. I do not say the clause is drawn up in the best possible way, but, as it stands, I do not think it will do much harm. Therefore, I would rather concur in the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and urge upon my hon. and learned Friend that the clause should be allowed to remain as it stands in the Bill.

Sir G. CAMPBELL: I was a member of the Committee which considered this Bill, and I wish to state that we were not able to thrash out the details as is done in Committee of the whole House —a thing which, in my opinion, is absolutely necessary in regard to measures such as this. I think we should hardly have been induced to enter upon the discussion in which we are engaged but for the high authority of the Chairman of Committees, and I regard him as a very high authority. At the same time, after what has been said, I hope my hon. and learned Friend who is in charge of the Bill will not press the Amendment, inasmuch as it seems to be the opinion of several eminent authorities that it is open to serious objection.

*Mr. WARMINGTON: Under the circumstances, I will, with the permission of the House, withdraw the Amendment. When I accepted it, I did not see exactly how it would work in regard to the latter part of the clause, in relation to which I think it might create some confusion. I, therefore, ask leave to withdraw the Amendment. ["No, no."]

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: I hope the House will allow the Amendment to be withdrawn. In my opinion, its effect upon the clause would be that, with respect to every misleading statement purporting to be made on the authority of an expert, the Director would be absolutely liable, unless the authority is contained in the Report or valuation, and in that case the exception would apply.

*Mr. G. OSBORNE MORGAN: I may be allowed to say——

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Gentleman has already spoken on this Amendment.

*Mr. G. OSBORNE MORGAN: I was about to speak on the question of the withdrawal of the Amendment.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Gentleman has no right to speak on this question again, save by leave of the House.

* Mr. G. OSBORNE MORGAN: Perhaps the House will allow me to say that if this Amendment be carried, the words "every statement" would apply not only to every statement made in writing but also to every oral statement.

Mr. KIMBER: It was on the consideration that this Amendment would be accepted that I withdrew my Amendment. It seems to me that the hon. and learned Gentleman's Amendment is one that ought to be accepted, and that the principle enunciated by the Chairman of Committees is correct, namely, that where a statement is made by a Director on the authority of an expert, the Director ought to be protected. The only alteration necessary after accepting the Amendment would be the striking out of the words "Report or valuation" in other places. If line 2 of page 2 is left as it is, it seems to me to be open to all sorts of objections, which would not apply to the general words suggested by the Chairman of Committees.

Mr. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): I wish to ask you, Sir, as a point of order, whether the Amendment, which was only temporarily withdrawn to permit another Amendment to be moved, can be renewed if the present Amendment be withdrawn?

Mr. COURTNEY: I wish to point out with respect to one portion of the clause that, as it stands, in respect of every statement purporting to be made from any Report or valuation of an expert the Director would have to prove that the expert made it, and that he had reason to believe the expert made it in good faith, and was competent to make it. The whole question seems to be narrowed to this, whether the defence should be limited to statements purporting to be made on the authority of an expert when such statements occur in a Report or valuation, but not in any other document though made by the same class of persons. I do not wish to embarrass the discussion of this Bill any further, but I must dissent to our reverting to the original form of the Bill.

*Mr. SPEAKER: In reply to the hon. Member for Northwich, who asked a question on a point of order, I may state that the Amendment which has been withdrawn, under the circumstances stated, can be renewed.

Mr. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I would put it to the House, how would it be if we were to leave out the words "Report or valuation," and insert the words "statement or extract" in the last line but one of the sub-section?

Mr. GROTRIAN (Kingston-on-Hull, E.): The liability under Sub-section A only goes to statements not made on the authority of an expert, so that under that sub-section a Director will be relieved of liability in regard to any statement made on the authority of an expert; but under Sub-section B the liability is limited to statements on the Report or valuation of an expert. The question is whether it is the wish of the House to widen the liability under Sub-section B, so as to make it run more in accord with the full exemption under Sub-section A. On the other hand, I may say the Bill was thoroughly thrashed out before the Grand Committee, and I believe it would, on the whole, be better to allow Sub-section B to stand as it now is, rather than attempt to doctor it, as is now proposed.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Is it your pleasure that the Amendment be withdrawn?

Several hon. Members: No.

(2.0.) The House divided:—Ayes 181; Noes 19.—(Div. List, No. 145.) (2.11.)

(2.29.) Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

(2.31.) Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 3, after the word "accountant," to insert the words "banker, mercantile firm, or official authority."—(*Mr. Kimber.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

(2.34.) Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): On a point of order, I wish to ask you, Sir, whether this Amendment ought not to have been moved, if at all, on Sub-section A?

*Sir R. LETHBRIDGE: On the point of order, I would point out, on the authority of the Chairman of Committees, that the 1st sub-section does not cover every possible case.

*Mr. SPEAKER: As far as a question of the order is concerned the Amendment may be moved.

*(2.36.) Mr. S. WILLIAMSON (Kilmarnock, &c.): I hope my hon. Friend will allow the Bill to remain as it is. Lots of people call themselves "bankers" who are not entitled to the name. "Mercantile firm" is very wide, and so is "official authority." I think the word "expert" covers all that is necessary.

*(2.37.) Sir R. LETHBRIDGE: Surely it is quite conceivable that a large class of documents which ought to be covered by the clause could not be classed as "Reports or valuations of engineers, experts," &c.

*Mr. WILLIAMSON: Yes, the word "expert" will cover them.

*(2.38.) Mr. G. OSBORNE MORGAN: I venture to ask what is a "mercantile firm," and, still more, what is an "official

authority"? If the people referred to possess the knowledge which alone entitles their statements to credit they will come under the head of "experts."

*(2.39.) MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I hope the Amendment will not be accepted, because there are many people connected with financial undertakings whom it would not be desirable to include in the excepting clause, and yet who describe themselves by the words used in the Amendment.

*MR. KELLY: I hope my hon. Friend will not press the Amendment.

*(2.40.) MR. WARMINGTON: I cannot accept the Amendment, and I should like to impress on the House that this matter has been discussed in the Grand Committee on Trade, of which the Mover of the Amendment was a Member. He did not attend. I dare say he had reasons for his absence; but I ask the House to stand by the Bill as it is.

*MR. TOMLINSON: I would point out that if the Amendment be adopted, it will be necessary to introduce other words also.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

*(2.41.) SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: I beg to move after the word "expert," in line 3, of page 2, to insert "or other document vouched by the name, address, and description of the author." I wish to point out to the hon. and learned Member in charge of the Bill that no provision is made in any part of it for the protection of Directors from misstatement in official documents, published on the faith of the Government of a colony, or a Local Government in India, or a Foreign State. If the hon. and learned Member can point out that such protection is afforded I shall not, of course, put the House to the trouble of dividing on this Amendment. But I do wish to obtain some solid assurance, either from the hon. and learned Member, or from some of those authorities whom the House is in the habit of following on a point of this kind. It will be in the recollection of the House that two or three of its leading authorities, whom we look upon as competent to guide us in the choice of the phraseology to be used in such cases, absolutely differed on a recent occasion as to the language that ought to be employed. I confess I was induced by the support given by the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees to one phraseology to vote in favour of it, because I thought, and I think still, if I had such authority as that for my decision, I could not be wrong. I think we should ask for a full assurance from those leading Members of the House who are competent to advise us on this point, whether, as the Bill stands now, there is any protection afforded to Directors and others when mis-statements are made in Reports which they feel justified in regarding as true, but which turn out to be untrue. I refer to cases in which a Director has made full and careful inquiry, but in which it is absolutely out of his power to go into every hole and corner, as it were, of the statements in a Memorandum. I do not see why the Directors should be penalised for an obscure mistake or mis-statement, whilst those persons, who ought really to be punished for it—usually the promoters, whose names are not shown on the face of the prospectus—are not touched by a single line or word of the Bill. I do not find in the measure a single word that refers to promoters. The Bill is utterly incomplete, and its chaotic condition is shown by the fact that, on a recent Amendment, the Chairman of Committees, and the author of the Bill were absolutely opposed to each other, and the House divided in a muddled state, without comprehending the point put before them. The result was the retention of words and phrases, which, on the high authority of the Chairman of Committees, are misleading and wrong.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 3, after the word "expert," to insert the words "or other document vouched by the name, address and description of the author."—(*Sir Roper Lethbridge.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*(2.47.) MR. WARMINGTON: My first objection to the Amendment is, that it will not make common sense of the clause, and my second—although I am not one of the high authorities to whom the hon. Gentleman referred—is that the words should remain as they are. I consider it

rank heresy to say that official statements are not made by experts. I should have thought that every official person who has special knowledge is an expert.

*(2.48.) MR. BRADLAUGH: It is inconvenient, after the time that this Bill has been on the Paper, that Amendments should be sprung upon us in such a way that it is impossible to give them full consideration. I understand that this Amendment would simply make nonsense of the clause. One argument used in support of this and other Amendments is, that the Directors ought not to be made liable for this, that, and the other misrepresentation made by the promoters. I would point out, however, that without the Directors the promoters would be unable to get credit from other people. The Directors become Directors for profit, and they ought to be responsible for the statements made.

*(2.50.) MR. S. WILLIAMSON: I think this Amendment might afford extra protection to the promoters and Directors of bogus companies, but that it would not carry out the objects of this Bill. Suppose a tea planter in India thinks he has discovered a gold mine and puts himself into communication with promoters with the object of starting a company. If under this Amendment he gives his name, address, and description, that will free the Directors, who are possibly men of straw for all the statements put forward in his name.

*(2.57.) SIR R. FOWLER: I would point out that Directors do not always become such for purpose of profit. There are many companies started for purely philanthropic purposes, and the Directors of which take no fees.

*(2.52.) SIR J. LUBBOCK (London University): Of course, if, as has been said, Directors are men of straw, it is clear that no provision inserted in this Bill will force them to make restitution. I am afraid, however, the Amendment will not carry out the object with which it is moved, and I would venture to suggest that the hon. Gentleman should not press it further on the present occasion. At the same time, I really would ask Her Majesty's Government to consider in "another place" whether the word "expert" covers everything that is necessary. Let me give an illustration. Some friends of mine wished to invest in property in America, and they sent out a distinguished expert to investigate the title, and he also made a Report on the question of the land. No doubt he is an expert on the legal question, but I think it might, perhaps, be argued in the Law Courts that he is not an expert on the question of land. If a man of high character and good judgment makes a Report, I think a Director ought not to be liable in such a case; but, under the Bill as it stands, the Directors could not refer to the Report on the one point without rendering themselves liable on the other.

*(2.54.) SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I am disposed to agree with that which has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman opposite as to the advisability of carefully considering the word "expert" before this Bill passes into law, but I do not think the example he gave was a very good one. No doubt the gentleman he referred to would be an expert with regard to the legal title of the land, but I do not think he could be regarded as an expert on a matter of which he has no special knowledge. I will undertake that the matter is fully considered by the Lord Chancellor and the Attorney General before the Bill passes into law.

(2.55.) MR. GROTRIAN: I think my hon. Friend the Member for Kensington (Sir R. Lethbridge) is needlessly alarming himself. He asks for protection in a case in which there is an official Report or a Report from some Government Department. If such a Report were misleading, the Director would simply have to show that he had reasonable ground to believe, and did believe, that the statements were true. Can it be assumed for a moment that any Judge would direct or any Jury find that, in regard to an official Report or a statement issued by a Government Department, a man had not reasonable ground to believe in its truth? I am myself a Director of many companies, and I shall be glad to assume the responsibility that will be thrown on me by this clause. I think a Director should not attempt to shirk any reasonable responsibility.

(2.58.) MR. CHANCE: I am sure the object of the hon. Member who has moved the Amendment is not to enable Directors to shirk the responsibility. I think the Bill is imperfect in this respect, that it renders it necessary to make the Director a defendant, and to subject him to the cost of defending an action when the persons taking proceedings would be willing and prepared to strike directly at the person who is really guilty of the fraud. I do not think this Amendment carries out the hon. Member's object. I hope it will be withdrawn, and that the Government will consider the question in "another place."

*(3.0.) MR. J. M. MACLEAN: I do not think we can have too many safeguards to protect Directors from being unjustly treated under this Bill. Let the Committee consider what the object of the Bill is. It is to do away with limited liability altogether, so far as Directors are concerned. It throws upon Directors unlimited liability. I grant that the Bill has been watered down a good deal, but still it is left to Judges and juries to say whether a Director has taken reasonable precautions to find out that statements in the prospectus were not misleading, and one knows that Judges are often disposed to be rather harsh in the treatment of capitalists, and that juries are occasionally apt to be even vindictive when Directors were brought before them by disappointed shareholders. This is a remarkable Bill, for it is really a Bill making the liability of Directors unlimited both in point of fortune and time. Under it a shareholder who has been a partner with a Director may be able, five or six years afterwards, when he has lost his money, to come into Court and make the Director liable. When penalties of this kind are sought to be imposed on Directors the House should inquire very carefully into every word in the Bill. The hon. and learned Member for Monmouthshire (Mr. Warmington) is very fond of telling us that this Bill was thoroughly threshed out by a Grand Committee upstairs; that this is only a formal stage; and that

it is wrong that we should raise any discussion. The present discussion shows the great inconvenience of referring a Bill of this kind to a Grand Committee, whose proceedings are only reported in the most abbreviated form. I venture to say there is not a Chamber of Commerce in the country, and hardly a dozen men of business, who are aware of what Parliament is doing in the way of imposing this unlimited liability on Directors. The truth is, that the Bill has been framed by lawyers familiar with the seamy side of company promotion for the purpose of protecting private capitalists and shareholders. This is a Bill directed against the most beneficent movement of modern times, the introduction through limited liability for cheap capital into Industrial Companies—a movement now going on so rapidly that I believe, before the end of the century, we shall hardly have any private proprietors of large industrial undertakings. The Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) has said, "Oh, we ought to have no mercy on Directors, because they may mislead shareholders."

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I do not think I said that. I said, in answer to the argument used by the Mover of the Amendment, that if it were not for the Directors the promoters would not be able to get the money from the public, and that, therefore, the Directors ought to be made responsible for the statements made.

*MR J. M. MACLEAN: But shareholders also go into companies. Are they to have no responsibilities? I complain that this Bill relieves shareholders from all kinds of responsibility. Why should this be? Why should we remove all responsibility from shareholders for the purpose of throwing the whole of it on Directors? It seems to me that the Bill goes much too far in that direction.

(3.7.) MR. ISAACSON: I was sorry to hear the speech of the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Maclean), for it is well-known that it is the shareholders who have suffered from the losses of companies. The Directors have suffered a minimum amount of the loss; they have suffered the loss possibly of their annual fees, but the shareholders have lost their capital. I have known cases in which false statements have been made by Directors who have evidently been urged by the promoters to make them, and in which the public have been induced to subscribe capital solely and wholly upon those statements. I hope the promoters of this Bill will continue to make it as drastic as possible for the protection of the public, for it is only the public who have to be considered in this matter.

Question put, and negatived.

*(3.9.) SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: The next Amendment which stands in my name is after "and," in line 5, page 2, to leave out the words "that the report or valuation was made by the person whose name it bears, and." I wish to bring the words in in a subsequent part of the clause, and to make them governed, as the other qualifications are governed, by the statement that he has reasonable ground for believing that the report or valuation was made by the person whose name it bore. It seems to me absurd to make such an anomalous and invidious distinction between the various forms of statements as is here made. As the Bill stands, every person responsible for the prospectus guarantees that the statement or extract from the report or valuation was true and fair, and he also guarantees that the report or valuation was made by the person whose name it bore. Then there is the question as to whether the report or valuation was made in good faith, and that the person making it was competent to make it. In this case, the Director is relieved from liability if he had reasonable ground for believing that the report or valuation was made in good faith, and that the person making it was competent to make it. Why on earth is this invidious distinction made between the various classes of statement? This is only another instance of the slipshod and careless way in which this Bill has been allowed to come down from the Grand Committee. In regard to the last two points raised, the President of the Board of Trade has given us the assurance that measures will be taken to alter the phraseology in another place. It was solely upon that pledge that I did not press my Amendment to a Division.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: What I undertook was that the word "expert" should be considered by the Government. I do not undertake that the word should be altered.

*SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: I quite understood that, and that is all I ask in regard to the present Amendment. I challenge the hon. and learned Member in charge of the Bill to give any sensible or rational explanation why a Director should be made to absolutely guarantee in its entirety the fact that the report or valuation was made by the person whose name it bore, while, on the other hand, he is only to guarantee his belief that the person making the report or valuation was competent to make it.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 5, to leave out the words, "that the report or valuation was made by the person whose name it bears, and."—(*Sir Roper Lethbridge.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

*(3.16.) MR. BARING: But for the hon. Gentleman's phenomenal loquacity, I could have wished that he had been on the Committee upstairs. I doubt very much whether his presence would have conduced to the transaction of business, but it might have saved us time here. There is a distinct and proper reason for the variation in these terms. It is the bounden duty of a Director to know that the report is made by the person who purports to sign it, but it is not always possible for him to know that that person is competent to make the report.

*SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: I do not wish to interrupt the hon. Gentleman——

*MR. BARING: I have done.

*SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: With the permission of the House I——

MR. BARING: I object.

(3.20.) MR. KIMBER: The House would do well to remember that the property reported upon may be situated thousands of miles away. How is it possible in such circumstances for a Director here to know that the valuation is a genuine one, or that the signature to the report has not been forged, or that the person employed is a competent person? Words ought to be inserted in the clause providing that the Director has taken the best means at his disposal to ascertain the authenticity of the report.

(3.21.) MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Newington, W.): It is ridiculous to suppose that any gentleman in England can prove that a document sent from a place 1,000 miles away was signed by the person whose signature it bears. We may require him to do so, but, fortunately, the law is interpreted by Judges who possess a fund of common sense, and no Court of Justice would put the interpretation upon the Bill which my hon. Friend supposes. If a signature is duly attested in the Courts of Law of the country in which the person signing the report resides, the fact would be received as a sufficient answer on the part of the Director, who believed the report so signed.

*(3.22.) MR. GAINSFORD BRUCE (Holborn): Who are to be responsible? The Directors, who certainly have some means of information, or the innocent shareholders, who have no means of information, and who have been misled by an inaccurate or misleading statement? We are dealing with a case where a prospectus contains a statement that a report is made by a particular person. It turns out that the report is a forgery. I submit that the Directors who have put their names to the prospectus, and who have certainly means of ascertaining whether the report is genuine or not, should bear the loss consequent upon their mistake, rather than the innocent shareholders.

*(3.23.) MR. TOMLINSON: My hon. and learned Friend forgets that what this Bill proposes to do is to place unlimited liability on the Directors, and the Court would have no power to relieve them. It seems to me that in a case where the Directors took every means to ascertain the genuineness of a document and still are deceived it would be very hard to make the Directors liable.

(3.24.) SIR H. DAVEY: According to this Bill, as it at present stands, it would be incumbent on the Director to prove not only that he took every reasonable means to ascertain the authenticity of the signature, but that the signature was *de facto* that of the person signing the report. Where a Director has believed on reasonable grounds that the report was made by the person whose name it purported to bear, and it subsequently appeared that the signature was a forgery—although he could not have any reasonable means of ascertaining the fact—it appears to me to be absolutely monstrous that this Director should be rendered liable for hundreds of thousands of pounds, which may have been subscribed on the faith of the prospectus. The Amendment proposes to require the Director to prove that he took reasonable means to ascertain the authenticity of the signature, and satisfied himself that the signature was authentic. Of course, he may be mistaken by a clever forgery, like anybody else, but I think that if he has taken all reasonable means to ascertain the authenticity of the signature, and has satisfied himself of its authenticity, he should not be rendered liable in damages for a single shilling.

*(3.26.) MR. WARMINGTON: The question is whether, when companies are started and prospectuses are issued on the strength of a report, with the object of obtaining money from the public, the Director ought not to satisfy himself that the report came from the person whose name it bore, and have evidence at call, if need be, to show that the report bore such name?

*(3.28.) MR. BRADLAUGH: It is not altogether a question whether the particular report is or is not signed by the person whose name it bears. Before a Director can be made liable the report must contain a statement which is either untrue or misleading, and on the faith of which a shareholder has invested his money. In the bulk of cases in which law suits have been brought against Directors, it has been found that there were three or four Directors in league with the promoter. I think that in these circumstances the Director ought to be held responsible in law.

(3.30.) MR. CHANCE: It appears to me that it is proposed to put a Director in the position of an absolute guarantor.

Now, that ought not to be the position of a Director. A Director is simply a pioneer for the shareholders. He does not say, "I want to sell something," but he says, "I want you to join with me in buying something from a third party; I want you to join me as a partner." Therefore, a Director ought not to be called upon to guarantee as facts matters about which he cannot be absolutely certain. There is no rule of law which makes a vendor absolute guarantor of title; and if a man sells land he is a guarantor only to the limited extent of the covenants.

(3.34.) MR. C. J. DARLING (Deptford): An additional argument for the Amendment is that a Director would not be excused if it turns out that he himself has been deceived by a downright forgery, even although he is the greatest pecuniary sufferer. It appears to me that the House would not be justified in inflicting this great hardship on directors or anybody else. This clause provides that the Director must satisfy himself that the Report or valuation was made by the person whose name is attached to it; that he must satisfy himself it was made in good faith and by a person competent to make it. Even if he does that, he still remains liable if he is deceived, although he may have believed it to be true. It is nonsensical to reply that the Judges are men of common sense, and would not mulct a man in damages and costs in a case in which he had been grossly imposed upon. The Judges have to administer the law as it is, and not as it should be; and if the hon. Member for Stockton himself were on the Bench he could not avoid deciding against a Director in such circumstances. I do hope the hon. Member for Monmouthshire will see his way to accept the Amendment.

*(3.38.) MR. S. WILLIAMSON: Of course, if the Amendment is accepted, I shall be prepared to assent to it; but I do not see how a forged document could be used as the basis of a company without the grossest carelessness on the part of the promoters. I do not see how such a document, if not genuine, could be made a basis for launching a company without much carelessness.

(3.40.) MR. COURTNEY: I would point out that if the Amendment is accepted, the Directors or promoters will still be liable, for they will have to prove that they had reasonable ground for believing that the document was signed by the person whose signature it bore, and that he was a competent person to make the Report. The arguments are strongly in favour of the Amendment. It is not reasonable to expect a person to prove that he ascertained beforehand that a document signed in a foreign country was genuine; and if he took all reasonable pains to satisfy himself, he did enough to save himself from further liability. I hope that the Amendment will be accepted.

(3.42.) MR. SALT: There are many companies, as hon. Members know, connected with foreign countries and the colonies, and in connection with these documents are sent home from abroad, and are embodied in the prospectus, in order to enable the investor to see what is offered. But it seems to me that if the words of the clause are retained it will be almost impossible for a man with credit to lose to endorse any of these statements coming from abroad.

(3.43.) SIR G. CAMPBELL: I am very suspicious of these attempts to find loopholes by which Directors may escape. A case rarely arises in which, with good faith, a Report of an expert is put forth and subsequently turns out to be forged. Still, I shall not object to the acceptance of the Amendment, if it will not involve us in a mesh of consequential Amendments.

*(3.45.) SIR M. HICKS BEACH: This is, of course, a very difficult point, but I think that if a Director has done his best to make himself reasonably certain that a Report is genuine, and if after that it proves to be a forgery, it will be impossible, under the clause, for the Court to exonerate him, and that would be going too far. I am inclined to think that the Amendment might be accepted if the words "after reasonable inquiry and examination" are inserted in the clause. If the House shows a desire to sanction this alteration, I hope the hon. Member for Monmouthshire will see his way to accept it.

(3.46.) VISCOUNT GRIMSTON (Herts, St. Alban's): Would it not be sufficient to insert words providing that a Director shall take reasonable means to ascertain that the Report was signed by the person whose signature it purported to bear?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I think it would be better to put it in the other form.

*(3.46.) MR. WARMINGTON: With the acceptance of the House I will accept the Amendment.

Question put, and agreed to.

(3.47.) Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 6, after the word "that," to insert the words "after reasonable inquiry and examination."—(*Sir Michael Hicks Beach.*)

Question, proposed "That those words be there inserted."

(3.48.) MR. CHANCE: These words would compel Directors not only to make reasonable inquiry, but to ascertain as to the competency of the person making the report. That would be a very difficult matter.

*(3.49.) SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I do not know anything into which Directors ought more to make inquiry than the competency of the person sending a report on the faith of which the public are asked to subscribe.

MR. CHANCE: Yes; but according to the clause not only must he reasonably believe in the report, but he must prove he has actually inquired into it and held some sort of examination. How can Directors be expected to examine as to the competency of an expert in minerals?

(3.50.) THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): It is important that Directors should not simply take the report of any person without finding out what are his qualifications. Some such provision as this must be inserted, or a Director might profess himself simply satisfied with a name, and not seek to find out the qualifications of the person whose name is attached to the report.

*(3.51.) MR. A. BROWN (Shropshire, Wellington): It might be that the person who made the report was not a competent person, but I see how that is provided against by the last words of the sub-section.

*(3.52.) MR. J. M. MACLEAN: What is the difference between Sub-section A and Sub-section B? One refers to a statement made by the Directors themselves on their own authority, and, in regard to that, it is perfectly right that they should be called upon to make reasonable inquiry and examination into those statemments before publishing them. But Sub-section B refers to statements made by experts, and it is provided that before issuing these statements the Director shall have reasonable ground for believing that the person who made the report was competent to make it, and that it was made in good faith. I think the words suggested by the right hon. Gentleman efface the distinction between the two sections, and ought not to find a place in this Bill.

(3.53.) SIR H. DAVEY: I really do not think this is a question on which the time of the House should be expended. All that is desired is that a Director should do what is necessary in order to form a just belief. He must make a reasonable inquiry and examination for the purpose of satisfying himself on that head, although I do not think, strictly speaking, that the words are necessary. I hold that the Amendment may well be accepted, as I do not think it would impose any greater burden on Directors than they ought to bear.

(3.54.) MR. MURPHY: I think the words "and examination" convey a distinct meaning that an examination has been made by a third person. I move that those words be omitted.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, to leave out the words "and examination."—(*Mr. Murphy.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'and examination' stand part of the proposed Amendment."

*(3.55.) SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: I think that this Amendment is very necessary. I will ask the House to consider what would be the effect of leaving in such words as "due inquiry and examination," in the case of a forged signature to a document that has come from abroad in a way that may induce

Directors reasonably to believe that it is true. How, in the case of a document coming from India, could Directors guarantee that the signature of the person whose signature it purported to be was genuine. I think that that is laying a most intolerable burden on the shoulders of Directors. I agree that we should insist on Directors and other responsible persons taking every reasonable care that the statements put forward are accurate, but in many cases, such as I have mentioned, it would be impossible to have more than reasonable grounds for believing; it would be impossible actually to verify the signatures. I do hope that the right hon. Gentleman will withdraw that portion of his Amendment which has been objected to. I do not think that the word inquiry even is needed, because the other provisions of the Bill render such inquiry imperative. I think this proposal puts too heavy a burden on the shoulders of Directors, and that it will tend unduly to relieve promoters of liability.

*Sir J. LUBBOCK: I shall support the Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman proposes to throw on Directors, not only the responsibility of inquiring, but of examining into the competency of an expert. What can they do more than inquire? Surely the words "inquiring into" are sufficient. I should like to ask what is meant by "examining into" which is not covered by "inquiring into"?

*Mr. G. OSBORNE MORGAN: I do not think that the words "and examination" carry the matter any further; but, as a long time has been spent over the point, I hope the House will come to a decision.

Sir M. HICKS BEACH: I move the insertion of the words merely to stiffen the language of the Bill.

Mr. KIMBER: It is said that this Amendment will tend to enlarge the responsibility of the Director; but it does not do so. The words already in the Bill have, in my opinion, a much wider scope than will be the case if those words are amended as proposed. The words in the Bill are that the Director shall prove "that he had reasonable ground for believing," and I think that any Court would be able to exercise a sound and clear judgment as to whether he had or had not reasonable ground. Therefore, to insert "after reasonable inquiry and examination" would be absolutely to limit the inquiry. I object to the insertion of these words altogether.

Mr. CHANCE: I think a proposal to insert "after reasonable inquiry," merely, would be a perfectly reasonable thing. An examination as to the signatory of a report or valuation cannot be unreasonable; and, therefore, so far I should be inclined to support those words. But do they not also apply to the competency of the person making the report or valuation? This being so, the Director is to be required to prove not only that he had reasonable ground to believe that the report was made by the person named, but that that person was also competent, so that the Director is to set himself as a sort of licensing authority and to make inquiry into the competency of every expert. I hope the hon. Gentleman will withdraw the words "and examination."

(4.5) The House divided:—Ayes 244; Noes 93.—(Div. List, No. 146.)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

*Sir R. LETHBRIDGE: The next Amendment standing in my name is simply consequential to that already adopted. But perhaps I may be permitted to vary the words I have placed on the Paper, in accordance with the terms suggested and approved by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, and, as I take it, also by the hon. and learned Gentleman who has charge of the Bill. I would, therefore, propose, after the word "faith," in Clause 3, page 2, line 9, to insert the words "by the person whose name it bears."

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

*Sir R. LETHBRIDGE: There is another Amendment I desire to move, in order to raise a question which ought to be decided by this House before parting with this clause. I propose, in Clause 3, page 2, line 11, to leave out the words—

"Or unless he proves that he had not consented to become a Director of the company, or that, having so consented, he withdrew his consent before the issue of the prospectus or notice, and that the prospectus or notice without his authority or consent."

I move this omission because I wish the House to decide what is really meant by this very badly-drafted Bill. [*Laughter.*] I think this is already shown by the numerous alterations and amendments made in the Bill, and although hon. Members laugh at my suggestion, I wish to raise the point—What will a Court of Law understand by the word Director, as it is used throughout this clause? Who is a Director? I respectfully urge on this House that the Bill does not touch certain persons who are really responsible for mis-statements and bogus undertakings generally. That is to say, the promoters of companies whose names do not appear on the face of the prospectus. It simply applies to those who do so appear as Directors, and, therefore, I want it to be set out very clearly who are to be considered Directors. A man is not a Director, and would not be held to be one by any Court, if he has not consented to become a Director, although his name may appear on the prospectus. If this be so, I simply say that the words I propose to omit are simply surplusage and verbiage. Beyond this, a man who has consented at one time provisionally to become a Director, but has subsequently withdrawn his consent, before the issue of any prospectus or notice, can no more be a Director than any other person having nothing whatever to do with the company; *ipso facto*, he is not a Director. I hope we shall hear from the hon. and learned Member in charge of the Bill some definite statement as to who are really to be rendered liable under this measure —whether he means those who have fraudulently or otherwise affixed names to a prospectus which ought never to have had those names upon it, or whether he means those who are really the promoters of the company?

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 10, to leave out from the words "make it," to the end of Clause 3.—(*Sir Roper Lethbridge.*)

Question proposed, "That the words from 'make it,' to the word 'before,' in line 13, stand part of the Bill."

*SIR J. LUBBOCK: I think if the hon. Gentleman who has proposed this Amendment will look carefully at the clause he will see that it applies to.

"Every person who is named in the prospectus or notice as a Director of the company or as having agreed to become a Director of the company either immediately or after an interval of time, and every person who has authorised or is responsible for the issue of the prospectus or notice."

Obviously, therefore, the words which it is proposed to omit are necessary and I hope, therefore, that the hon. Member will not think it necessary to press this Amendment.

*SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: After what has just been said I ask leave of the House to withdraw this Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

*MR. KELLY: I beg to move, in place of the Amendment standing in my name, the following Amendment:—

Clause 3, page 2, line 13, after the word "consent," to insert these words, "or has given proper public notice that he has sent in his resignation and has ceased to be such Director."

I do think it would be a most unfortunate thing, if in seeking to bring about a remedy for one evil, we should create a much greater evil. If the result of this Bill were to be that it would become almost impossible for any honest man to become the Director of a company, the House will, I think, agree with me in saying it would have been much better if this Bill had never been brought into the House at all. Perhaps the House will be somewhat surprised to know that there are cases in which a man has acted as a Director, and yet has never taken on himself the office of Director. The question as to whether a man has or has not in fact become a Director is one to be determined by the circumstances of each case. If this Bill only referred to ordinary cases of first issues, there would be no point in the observations I am making; but are there not many cases in which a prospectus, when first issued, is *bonâ fide*, but in which, subsequently, a majority of Directors, finding they cannot induce the public to take up a second or third set of shares or debentures and so subscribe a sufficient sum to get the necessary works for a mining or a railway undertaking done, agree to issue a fresh prospectus containing untrue or misleading statements. Take the case of a railway abroad, in regard to which a majority of the Directors agree to overstate the fact as to the extent of the completed line. A Director who had been a party to the original prospectus might decline to be a party to the subsequent one, and it is obvious that he ought to be able to divest himself of responsibility for a statement the truth of which he doubts, and for which he refuses to vouch. That is a case which is a common one; but from the words of the clause as they now stand, that if a man becomes a Director and acts for a number of years, he cannot withdraw from the position as I hold he should be able to do if he wishes. A man may be a Director for five years; every one of the other original Directors may cease to be Directors—there may not be any other person living from whom he can withdraw his consent to be a Director. Therefore, I submit that there should be some limitation adopted in the clause. Directors who wish to be honest should have the power of withdrawing from a Directorate the moment transactions take place that they repudiate, and they should be allowed to put an end to their responsibility as Directors. So far as I understand the facts, there is considerable doubt as to that which constitutes the act of ceasing to be a Director. A man may cease to be a Director in his own intention—that is to say, he may send in his resignation—but I am not sure whether his responsibility will not continue if his co-Directors refuse to accept his resignation. The cases must be decided according to their varying circumstances. Two things must be clear: first, that the act of a Director sending in his resignation is *bonâ fide*, and that he intends it to be acted on; and, secondly, that he intends no longer to be in the position of a Director, or to do any act which a Director alone can perform. I do not wish to labour the point, and I am bound to say that possibly the first part of the Amendment is very vague, but it is susceptible of easy modification. I understand that an hon. Member, who has an Amendment lower down, is not prepared to move it; and I think he is wise in refraining, because it seems to me it would be a most dangerous Amendment for the House to accept. I do not think it would be right to say, in the case of a man who had lent his name to a concern, and on the strength of whose name many shareholders had been induced to come forward with subscriptions—I do not think it would be right to provide that in such a case he should be able to escape all liability by giving notice of his intention to leave the Directorate three days before allotment. I think a Director should be required to give such notice as would be proper and reasonable under the circumstances. It would be idle to seek to protect the public by allowing a Director to give three days' notice of his intention to resign his directorship before the allotment of the shares, and advertising the fact in a paper circulating in a district in which the registered office of the company is situated, as proposed by the Amendment of the hon. Member for Dundee. This seems to me to be obvious, for this office might be in Wales, when the great bulk of those subscribing for the shares might reside in London. I hope that whatever view the House may take of the Amendment, it will not seek to whittle the words down so as to make the notice a merely technical one, and such as would never be likely to be brought to the knowledge of those who had subscribed for shares.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 13, after the word "consent" to insert the words "or has given proper public notice that he has sent in his resignation and ceased to be such director."—(*Mr. John Kelly.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*(4.40.) SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: Before this Amendment is put to the House, I think it is clear that we should ask the hon. and learned Gentleman in charge of the Bill whether, broadly speaking, he accepts the view of the Mover of the Amendment; secondly, I think we may fairly ask from the hon. and learned Gentleman who has moved the Amendment what he means by the word

"proper?" "Proper public notice" is a very vague term, and I suppose we might say in regard to it *Quot homines, tot sententiæ*—every man has his own idea of what is a proper public notice. This is really a very serious and important point. Public notice given by a Director of his having ceased to be a Director invariably means, I take it, the wrecking of the company to which he is attached. There can be no doubt that if a gentleman who is prepared to be a Director has obtained information before the company goes to allotment which convinces him that some fraud is contemplated, he will resign without a moment's hesitation, and notify the fact in such a way that investors will not be misled by the fact of his name appearing on the prospectus. There is no doubt about such a case as that; but I imagine that if this Bill passes, in the future a Director, when he sees that he has to examine every statement made in a prospectus, and that for the authenticity of every obscure document that may be referred to in the prospectus he is liable to the extent of his whole fortune, will hesitate very seriously before allotment before he allows his name to appear in connection with the enterprise, however sound and genuine it may be. What is he to do in such a case? The hon. and learned Gentleman who proposed the Amendment said that in such a case the Director should give proper public notice that he has sent in his resignation. That means that, because he has been associated with other gentlemen in an enterprise that may be of the soundest possible character, but is not quite certain on some obscure point, and, therefore, is legitimately and properly anxious not to have any connection with it, he is bound to wreck that enterprise. The question is a difficult one, and I think the point raised by the Mover of the Amendment should be arranged for, but I do not think it will be met by the acceptance of these words. I hope that before the Bill passes into law the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade or the hon. and learned Gentleman in charge of it will devise some means of meeting the important point raised. I do not think the Amendment should be accepted in its present form.

(4.45.) MR. MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr): I think the difficulty could be got over by providing that the prospectus should bear on the face of it the names of all existing Directors.

*(4.45.) MR. WARMINGTON: I admit that there may be something in the point raised by the Mover of the Amendment, but I doubt whether it is possible to provide words to meet it without doing an injustice. I would suggest to the hon. Member that, having received this acknowledgment of his point, he should allow it to be dealt with when the Bill is in the House of Lords.

(4.47.) MR. KIMBER: I hold that some such Amendment is required. A Director of a company may, after the issue of the prospectus, learn something, owing to the fact of the company being advertised by the prospectus, which may make it his bounden duty as a man of honour to retire. If this Bill passes without Amendment in this connection it will be out of the power of the Director to do so. I think that a *locus penitentiæ* should be open to the last moment. For instance, it ought to be competent for a Director to retire if he thinks that the allotment has been made upon an insufficient contribution. He should be allowed to do so at any time before the actual allotment, provided notice is given to the person making application.

(4.50.) MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I confess I have not followed the argument, but it seems to me there is nothing to prevent any Director who has discovered anything about the company which may influence his action from resigning. ["Yes there is!"] No, not from resigning; but there is to prevent him getting rid of any liability he has incurred. What is the liability which affects a Director in his position? It arises only in case he has been a party to a false statement which has misled other people, or in case he has not taken sufficient pains to ascertain if a statement to which he has given currency is true or false. If he finds it to his interest to go out of the company, I have no objection; but I am extremely unwilling that he should, at the same time, get rid of liability due to his own misconduct or tactics; his misconduct if he sanctioned a false statement; his tactics if he neglected to make sufficient inquiry into the accuracy of a statement. The hon. and learned Gentleman did not, perhaps, give us the full particulars of the case he put before the House. He spoke of a Director who formed a company and afterwards resigned on information which he did not have previously. Well, everything depends on whether he was a party to any statement in the prospectus which was false. If he was no party to such a statement, he would not be liable; he might resign, and no liability would attach to him if he had made reasonable inquiry and examination into the statement, and satisfied himself it was not false or misleading. But if the Director was a party to a false statement, and if some shareholders could show that he was led to join the company by this false statement, and if he could show, at the same time, that the Director had not made reasonable inquiry into the truth, then the Director ought to remain liable.

*(4.53.) SIR R. FOWLER: I am sorry my hon. Friend (Mr. Kimber) did not give us a little more information on the case he mentioned. As I understand, the noble Lord had private information that induced him to retire from the company. I should have thought his first course should have been to call his co-Directors together and put forward his information saying, "After this I object to going on, and our duty is at once to return the money paid and cease to advertise the company." Then the liability would be simply for the expenses of advertising, consulting solicitor, and small initial expenses. But, as the clause stands, it would seem to be a hard case for the noble Lord if he, having taken this course and having put the matter before his colleagues and his colleagues deciding to go on and make themselves liable, he hereafter should be involved in the same liability with them. That is a case the House ought to consider.

(4.55.) MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.): I agree with the criticism of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. The liability of a Director is up to the time of the issue of the prospectus or notice. This Bill does not interfere with the liability of a Director in respect of any subsequent publication of the prospectus, but merely up to the time of notice. It seems to me a Director is absolved under reasonable conditions, if he did not consent to the issue, or if he can prove that, having consented, he withdrew his consent before the issue of the prospectus or notice, and that such notice was issued without his authority or consent. It seems to me that no Director will be liable unless, in fact, he consented to the issue of the prospectus, or remained a Director, knowing that the prospectus was being issued, and that it contained a false statement. The hon. Member opposite has discussed the situation of a Director who subsequently became informed of a matter which, if he had known, in the first instance, he ought not to have sanctioned the issue at all. Such a case remains regulated by the Common Law and is not interfered with by this Bill. ["No!"] That is my opinion. If he allows his name to remain, and allows the thing to go forward with his name as a voucher, without attempting to prevent it, then he is liable. I am inclined to think that in moving this Amendment there is some confusion in the liability which arises on the first issue and subsequent issue of notices upon which the Director allows his name to appear and which is not dealt with by the Bill.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

*(4.58.) SIR J. LUBBOCK: Before we leave Clause 3, I should like to point out that no limit of time of liability is provided. It is reasonable there should be some limit, for it might be possible to prove circumstances within a reasonable time, but not after the lapse of years. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider whether a clause should not be introduced limiting the time within which actions should be brought under the Bill.

*(4.59.) SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I shall be very happy to consider that point, but I apprehend a limit is provided by the Statute of Limitations. Of course, it may be urged that that limit should be reduced, but that is a point upon which I can express no opinion at present.

(5.0.) MR. BRUNNER: I would suggest the insertion of the words "or resigned" after the word "consent."

It cannot be said that a Director who may have been a Director four or five years, or even more, can have been considered to have withdrawn his consent if he wants to retire before the issue of the prospectus or notice. A second prospectus asking for money from the public is a very common thing, and a Director may desire to withdraw before the statement or prospectus is put before the public. Such a case is not provided for by the words in the Bill. I should like the hon. Member in charge of the Bill to consider this point.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 13, after the word "consent," to insert the words "or resigned."—(*Mr. Brunner.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and negatived.

(5.2.) MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham): I wish to raise the point mentioned in the Amendment of which the hon. Member for Dundee has given notice, where a Director has resigned his office three days before allotment, and has advertised such resignation in newspapers circulating in the district where the registered office of the company is situated. It is a different point to that which has been raised, and, I think, a material point; it deals with a man who, having become a Director, comes into further information between the issue of the prospectus and the allotment of shares. I think that a man who sends in his resignation before the allotment is made ought to be protected by some such words as these.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 13, after the word "notice" to insert the words, "or that, having been a Director, he has three days before allotment resigned his office, and has advertised such resignation in a newspaper circulating within the district in which the registered office of the company is situated."—(*Mr. Baumann.*)

*MR. SPEAKER: With the difference of the three days, the Amendment is substantially one upon which the House has decided, and is, therefore, not in order.

MR. KIMBER: May I ask if the words I propose "or before allotment" would be in order?

*MR. SPEAKER: I think the hon. Member may move that Amendment.

Mr. Brunner

(5.4.) MR. KIMBER: I will do so. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham dealt with the case of a Director having placed his name on a prospectus, and having neglected to use means to satisfy himself of the accuracy of a statement therein, but that was not the case I put. I put the case of a Director having taken every means to satisfy himself, and who afterwards came *bonâ fide* into possession of information which may not go to falsifying the statement in the prospectus, but may be a material truth which should be made known to the persons making application. I quite agree with what has been said by the hon. Baronet as to the duty of such a Director, and it would be my advice to him that he should, as a matter of courtesy to his Colleagues, put the matter before them. But if they do not act as he would have them, he is at the mercy of his Colleagues, who may be the nominees of the promoters, and they may proceed to allotment, and he, though he may have tried to protect the allottees, may be prevented by the state of the law. He can resign, but he cannot escape the consequences attaching to himself, with the other Directors; he is still under the liabilities the Bill provides. The hon. and learned Member for Dumfries says that he is protected under the Common Law, but I dispute that proposition. He is committed to the statement in the prospectus issued, and the advertisements continue, on the faith of which men may take shares. I say distinctly he is not protected by Common Law.

MR. R. T. REID: I said his liability is under Common Law.

MR. KIMBER: The Bill makes a man responsible for any omission or false assertion, any omission of a material truth, and if a man having incurred responsibility is not allowed to get out of that responsibility, under such circumstances as I before detailed to the House, that is adding a gross injustice to the others contained in this Bill. I shall divide in support of the Amendment I now move.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 13, after the word "notice," to insert the words "or before allotment."—(*Mr. Kimber.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'or before allotment' be there inserted."

*(5.9.) SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: Before the question is put, I think we have a right to be informed exactly as to the point we are here enacting. Does the hon. and learned Member in charge of the Bill mean to assert, that after a Director has attached his name to a prospectus, in firm belief in its *bona fides*, arrived at after thorough inquiry, and that then, if he obtain fresh information before allotment, and takes every possible step to act on such information, withdrawing his name from the Directorate, and giving public notification of the fact; does the hon and learned Member mean to tell us that, notwithstanding all this, that Director shall be held liable for all his Colleagues or the Board may do in proceeding to allotment and carrying out the purposes of the Company in an improper manner? If so, it seems to me that to state such a proposition carries a negative with it. I hope the hon. and learned Gentleman will tell us what is his real intention. I would suggest to him that he might fairly accept the Amendment, which seems to me to be but simple justice.

*(5.2.) MR. WARMINGTON: I cannot accept the Amendment, nor do I accept the views of the hon. Member who moved it as to the objects of this Bill. The Bill makes no Director in any degree liable for statements in the prospectus, unless he has neglected his duty. If a Director is party to an untrue or a misleading statement, he is open to an action; but if he can prove that, after careful inquiry, he believed such statement was true and honestly made, he is not liable to penalty. The allottee must show that he subscribed on the faith of the statements in the prospectus, and if this is shown, why should not the person who can be held responsible for the prospectus be liable to the consequences? That is the whole of the Bill.

*(5.12.) SIR J. LUBBOCK: The case contemplated in the present Amendment is that of a Director who ascertains that he has been misinformed, and goes to his brother Directors and says, "Manifestly, we ought not to go on with allotment," makes this known as well as he is able by advertisment in the newspapers, and resigns his connection with the Board, but his Colleagues, against his remonstrances, proceed to allotment. The words in the Bill still leave him liable, though he has done everything in his power to make known the facts that have come to his knowledge, and to protect the shareholders from loss. This is a very hard case, and it is a point Her Majesty's Government would do well to consider when the Bill goes to another place.

(5.15.) The House divided:—Ayes 64; Noes 281.—(Div. List, No. 147.)

It being half after Five of the clock, Further Proceeding on consideration, as amended, stood adjourned.

Further proceeding to be resumed on Wednesday next.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

(NO. 6.) COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

*MR. MILVAIN (Durham): I would ask the hon. Member for Cirencester, seeing that he has a direct pecuniary interest in the passing of this Bill, whether he can see his way, after the episode of last evening, to withdraw it?

*MR. SPEAKER: There is notice of an Instruction to the Committee, but the Instruction is not moved. The Instruction is irregular, because it is in a mandatory form, and as it is not moved I have no alternative but to leave the Chair at once.

MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): I do not know whether I may say by way of personal answer——

MR. SPEAKER left the Chair.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

INTOXICATING LIQUORS (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 7.)

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

BOILER EXPLOSIONS ACT (1882) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No 339.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

*SIR W. HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.): I may, perhaps, be allowed a word of explanation. By the Act of 1882 provision was made for formal investigation by the Board of Trade into boiler explosions, and that power has been used beneficially by the Board of Trade. There are certain bodies exempted from these promises [*Cries of* "Objection."] I think I might be allowed to explain——

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): We are not allowed that.

Second Reading deferred till to-morrow.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (NEW CODE.)

Copy ordered, "of Estimate of the probable additional Expenditure caused by the changes in the New Code, 1890." (*Sir William Hart Dyke.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 346.]

MOTIONS.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) ACT (1867) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stephen Williamson, Bill to amend "The Public Health (Scotland) Act, 1867," in relation to Hospitals for Burghs, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Stephen Williamson, Mr. Shiress Will, and Mr. Donald Crawford.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 345.]

HELIGOLAND.

On the Motion for adjournment,

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I should like to get some assurance from the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs as regards the cession of Heligoland to Germany. Are we to understand that a Bill will be brought in soon to effect this very desirable purpose, which I may mention I brought under the notice of the House four years ago? I then advocated the cession strongly, but received a most direct snub from the present Administration for my interference. A similar answer was given here a few days since, but I have great pleasure at finding that Lord Salisbury has adopted my proposal.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): It is stated in the Despatch from Lord Salisbury, a copy of which is in the hands of hon. Members, that a Bill will be presented for the purpose. When that Bill will be brought in is a question that should be addressed to the Leader of the House, not to me.

DR. TANNER: Are we to understand also that Gibraltar will be given up to Spain?

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): When will the Despatch and other Papers in relation to these arrangements be circulated?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Two hundred copies of the despatch have been sent to the Vote Office, and have been distributed, and every hon. Member will shortly receive a copy. I can say nothing about further papers.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I presume that is the Despatch which appeared in the newspapers this morning?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Yes; a number of copies were in the Vote Office last night.

House adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 19th June, 1890.

SAT FIRST.

The Lord Bishop of Durham—Took the Oath for the first time.

The Lord Bishop of Salisbury—Took the Oath for the first time.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

CENTRAL LONDON RAILWAY BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Sudeley.*)

*The Bishop of LONDON: My Lords, I hope you will make a little allowance for a Bishop intruding into a matter of a description with which Bishops are not generally supposed to be concerned. It is not usual for any Bishop to oppose a Railway Bill, because the settlement of such matters is, generally speaking, left to those who are more intimately concerned with material questions. Bishops who are mostly concerned with spiritual and moral questions, do not usually take any part in them. But I am sure I shall have the indulgence of your Lordships in taking a part in this case, because I take that part on the ground of danger to St. Paul's Cathedral, which is not only dear to the citizens of London, but to the Church and the whole of England. The Bishop of London may naturally be supposed to watch with very careful jealousy anything which may possibly endanger a fabric which we all admire very much and value so highly. The proposal in this case is to carry a railway from Bayswater to Cheapside, underneath Oxford Street and Holborn, to the corner of Newgate Street, and there it approaches very near the Cathedral of St. Paul's. The railway itself is at a greater distance than the station will be, but the station which it is proposed to have at the corner of Newgate Street as proposed, will come within about 70 yards of the north-east corner of the cathedral. I think the exact distance is 225 feet—consequently it becomes a matter of very serious consideration how this will affect the stability of the cathedral, as it now stands. Now, my Lords, we have very distinct evidence indeed of the kind of foundation on which St. Paul's Cathedral rests. We know by the researches made by Sir Christopher Wren, the architect of the cathedral, that there is a considerable quantity of brick-earth at the surface, and that when you have got below that, you very soon come to sand and gravel, then below that is what Sir Christopher Wren called "a beach," and then a little lower still we come to the London clay. Now, the sand and gravel which I have mentioned are known to be water-bearing strata. They are full of water up to some height in the strata. The top of the sand is said to be tolerably dry, but the bottom of the sand and gravel is certainly not, and the real danger which threatens St. Paul's Cathedral is that the water may be drained off from this sand and gravel and, consequently, that the sand and gravel, may sink down to a lower space than it occupies at present. Your Lordships are, I suppose, quite aware that of all the things we know water is one of those which it is most difficult, if not absolutely impossible, to compress into a smaller space. You can compress sand and gravel without any great difficulty if you use weight enough, and you can compress even tolerably hard rock if you get weight enough upon it, but water, as far as we know, can hardly be compressed at all. The drawing away of the water from this sand and gravel will, therefore, leave the sand and gravel subject to compression by the weight above them, and the weight above them in this case is an enormous weight—it is the weight of the whole of the vast edifice; and, therefore, my Lords, I think it must be admitted that if there would be a danger of that kind in any case, it is quite certain there must be danger in this case. The danger, of course, is precisely this, that when you have anything like a withdrawal of water which lies underneath the foundations, the subsidence is not always equal. It cannot be. The foundations subside more in one part than in another, and the result, of course, is that your building is unequally supported. Anybody can see that the danger from that is very serious, and that in all such cases, you will have subsidences, cracks, and possibly the actual ruin of parts of the structure. My Lords, it is this danger that all those who are concerned in the safety of St. Paul's are anxious about. The promoters of the Bill have just laid a statement before the House, and it appears from that statement that they are prepared to say there is no danger whatever. They say there is no real risk to St. Paul's. But let me point out, in the first place, that it is not quite sufficient for them to say there is no real risk, unless they are prepared to point out how this argument which I have put before your Lordships' House is to be met. I have gone carefully through the evidence, and I must say that I cannot find any answer to this argument. Then, my Lords, I have to observe in the next place that these are certain cases adduced in which a railway has gone very near a great structure without doing it any very great damage. In support of this Bill it is urged that the Metropolitan District Railway runs within 70 feet of Westminster Abbey, and that it has done no damage to Westminster Abbey; also that it runs within 20 feet of Westminster Hospital, and has done no damage to Westminster Hospital. That, of course, would be relevant enough if the depths were at all comparable with one another, but the fact is that the foundations of Westminster Abbey go down from the surface, probably 15 feet, while the District Railway is below the surface just 18 feet, and, therefore, whatever drainage would be caused by the Metropolitan District Railway would be a drainage of a depth of three feet only. That sums up the mischief that can possibly be done to Westminster Abbey by the District Railway. The withdrawal of the water from that three feet might conceivably do mischief; but it is not at all surprising that we should find no such mischief has been done when we consider that it is only from so small a depth of strata that the water has been withdrawn. But the rails of the Central London Railway would be 53 feet below the bottom of the foundations of St. Paul's Cathedral. There is a vast difference between taking the water away from merely 3ft., and taking the water away from 53ft. of strata; and we cannot at all argue that

The Bishop of London

because a shallow railway has been run close to Westminster Abbey without doing any harm you may, therefore, run a railway to the depth of 53ft. close to St. Paul's Cathedral, and do no harm whatever to that great structure. It is plain in each case that the railway will only drain away the water down to its own depth, and that if you are affecting only 3ft. you may do little or no damage at all. I am not quite clear, my Lords, that no damage has been done to Westminster Abbey, because I believe the evidence of the Clerk of the Works is that there has been some slight damage done, although as yet it is not very much. But to drain away all the water that may lie at this depth of 53ft. is a very different thing indeed, and the danger must be estimated in a totally different manner. Then it is stated that the railway would be carried through the London clay. It will be, no doubt, to a great extent, carried through the London clay, but it will very likely come above the level of the clay in various places. We cannot at all guarantee that the bottom of it will not be above the clay just at this part, and, therefore, the suggestion that the clay will hold the water which is above it, and protect the strata from sinking, does not apply in this case unless you can prove that at this point the water would lie altogether below the level of the railway itself. Even then you would have a great deal to show in order to prove that the London clay has no chinks or fissures in it, through which the water could penetrate. But, of course, my Lords, to have a railway constructed at that depth is more likely to be dangerous, although one at a considerably further distance might possibly be tolerably safe. But that is not all; it is proposed to put between the railway and St. Paul's Cathedral a large station, which, of course, must run down to the same depth as the railway itself; then there must also be shafts sunk down to that level, and all this is to be done within 75 yards of St. Paul's. Of course it may not come quite so close as I have mentioned, but the plans indicate the construction of a station which is to come within that distance. It is obvious, on the face of it, that even if it were possible to carry the railway, considered by itself, so near to St. Paul's without risk, to make this station and these shafts close by is entailing a risk of a very much more important character, a risk so serious that I do desiderate a better answer from the engineer than simply the *ipse dixit* of a man who says there is no danger to be apprehended. But, my Lords, that is not the whole matter. The engineer who has charge of this work is the Engineer also who has charge of the construction works of the London and Southwark Subway, and that subway is being constructed in the very same manner in which this railway is proposed to be constructed. Well, the engineer, when he gave his evidence in support of the Bill for the London and Southwark Subway, stated that that subway would do no mischief to surrounding buildings; but, my Lords, the subway has done mischief almost all along its extent. I have a list here showing many cases where houses have been injured. In 15 different cases mischief has been done, and, in particular, we have had injury done to St. James's Church, Kennington. That church is almost destroyed by the railway coming close to it. The engineer, afterwards, when he was asked whether the subway had not damaged the church, replied that the church was very slightly built, and that it was not at all like the solid masonry which Sir Christopher Wren took care to put into St. Paul's Cathedral. That answer, I think, my Lords, is of some importance upon this proposal, and we may say of that engineer's opinion in our view of it *valeat quantum.* But it is to be observed that this engineer, who had previously expressed himself as convinced that the subway would not at all hurt the property along its course, now gives, when it is clear that it has hurt the adjoining property, a totally different account of the matter, and says that the cause of the damage was that the injured building was not substantial enough. Against the fact that the statement made by the engineer was directed to the fact of the church being of rather unsubstantial construction, I put the fact of the enormously greater weight of St. Paul's Cathedral. My Lords, you have not here to consider the mere weight of an ordinary church. This is, no doubt, a very different thing, and when you have to consider such a weight as that of the vast edifice of St. Paul's Cathedral, you know for certain that the amount of pressure which will be existing in the case of that structure to squeeze the water out through any outlet which is provided for it, will be incalculably greater than the pressure exerted by the weight of such a comparatively small building as St. James's Church. It is said, my Lord, that this railway is to be constructed on an entirely new method. It is to be constructed upon the atmospheric pressure principle, and it is said that the atmospheric pressure used will be such as to prevent the water from escaping. Well, at any rate, we ought to have very clear evidence that it is possible to do so. In the case of the subway, they did not succeed in preventing mischief. They did succeed, to some degree, in preventing this perpetual leakage of water, but then your Lordships must consider that the subway is a tube of only 11 feet diameter, while this railway tunnel is nearly three times that diameter—its actual diameter is, I believe, 29 feet. Then there is the space for this station besides to be excavated. It may be quite possible to do with a tube 11 feet in diameter what it is quite impossible to do with a tube 28 feet in diameter. Every mathematician knows perfectly well that the amount of pressure which comes from the surface in such a case is not merely in proportion to diameters of tubes, but that it is very much larger in proportion as the diameters increase; and with regard to the pressure which will have to be resisted here, certainly there is no evidence yet to show that it can be resisted at all. We have the instance of the subway now being constructed in America under the river Hudson at New York. There they have had accidents occurring. Only in January last the tunnel they were making collapsed and killed 20 people, and we do not know yet whether it will be found possible for them to go on with that subway. At any rate we ought to be quite sure what we are doing before we sanction the introduction of this at present experimental method of dealing with such a case as this. The London County Council have had a proposal before them for making a subway which they were to authorise. But they declined to authorise it until they had

had further experience, because they believed that the experiments were not sufficiently conclusive at present to justify them in accepting the belief of the engineer that this could be done without any serious risk, Now, it may be said that we have great experts declaring that they have looked into this, and that they are quite sure there is no risk of damage being done, but when your Lordships have these facts before you, you see here is one of these great engineers giving evidence of one kind at one time, and of another kind at another time, saying first that he is sure no damage will be done by the construction of the London and Southwark Subway, and then saying, when the damage is done, that it is the fault lies in the construction of the building which is damaged, and that it is not the fault of his subway in damaging it. I think your Lordships will agree that this kind of assertion on the part of engineers is not, as it does not seem to me to be, at all satisfactory. An engineer has been employed to look into the matter, from our point of view, and he was very anxious to put before the other House the case of Westminster Abbey, because he knew that something has been said about the circumstances of that case as bearing upon the present instance, but that was ruled to be irrelevant there. Certainly it is rather remarkable that it should be ruled irrelevant before the Committee of the House of Commons, and that yet the promoters of the Bill should cite that instance in favour of what they propose to do. My Lords, this is not a matter, surely, which ought to be decided upon mere speculative grounds. You ought not, surely, to run any risk of serious damage to such a fabric as St. Paul's Cathedral, unless you are quite sure. There are cases, of course, in which it is reasonable to say—"Here is a most important commercial undertaking, which will be of commercial advantage, and which will facilitate business, something which does contribute largely towards the commercial prosperity of the city, and, therefore, we must run a little risk, and if there be a doubt we must give the commercial undertaking the benefit of the doubt." But can you say that in such a case as this? Surely, if there be a doubt in this case, my Lords, you ought to give the benefit of that doubt to the Cathedral of St. Paul. If anything were done to wreck that great monument of Christian architecture, can we conceive any greater discredit to the Parliament of this country than that it should have consented to bring very serious ruin upon such a structure, in order that people might save 15 minutes in coming from Bayswater to Cheapside? I cannot conceive, if the importance of the matter is duly weighed, that those who really feel the gravity of so dealing with such a structure will be willing to consent to this in a case where, certainly, we have no distinct proof of safety, but where we have, on the contrary, very distinct evidence that the experiment has not always been successful, and, when that is the case, it is too much to say we should allow such an experiment to be made now at the cost of what we value so much, of what we admire so highly, and of what we look upon as one of the glories of the Metropolis of England. I appeal to your Lordships to support me in resisting a speculation which may have such disastrous consequences as this, and I will ask anyone who feels disposed to vote on the other side, to think for a moment what he would feel if this Bill were to pass and he were a year hence to see that some very serious damage had been done to our great cathedral, seeing that he himself had had some hand in allowing it to be done. I appeal specially to your Lordships because I am the Bishop of that cathedral, and charged, therefore, with the duty of representing its fortunes in this House, and I am only doing my duty to the very best of my very imperfect ability in stating as clear a case as I can why we should hesitate, and hesitate long, before we agree to such a fatally hazardous experiment.

Amendment moved, to leave out the word "now," and add at the end of the Motion the words "this day six months."—(*The Lord Bishop of London.*)

*VISCOUNT POWERSCOURT: My Lords, the opposition of the right rev. Prelate to this Bill goes to the principle of the Bill. I think that in a case such as this, as the right rev. Prelate has said, it requires great consideration; but I think your Lordships will agree that it is better not to oppose such a Bill on the principle involved in it. In successive Sessions different Bills with the object of improving the Metropolitan underground communications have been thrown out on various pleas. In one year objection was raised on account of injury to the trees in Hyde Park although the railway was to run under the roadway and 50 feet under the surface. In this case it is stated that the nearest point of the railway will be 250 feet distant from the Cathedral. I should doubt very much if any settlement of earth which could be caused by making a tunnel at that distance, could possibly affect the foundations of that magnificent structure. Your Lordships all know perfectly well the extraordinary way in which the great traffic of London has increased, and the congestion in the thoroughfares of Piccadilly, Oxford Street, and other places is apparent to everyone. I think it is unnecessary to say more to show the absolute necessity of some improvement in the means of the railway communication in the centre of the Metropolis. The scheme has been strongly supported in another place, and although, of course, as the right rev. Prelate says, we have not had the Bill before us in this House yet, still I think that there is a strong case for reading the Bill a second time, and for referring it to a Select Committee. The right rev. Prelate cited the case of a church in Kennington, where he says that the London and Southwark subway went close to it, but I think the distance of 250 feet, which is stated to be the nearest point here cannot be said to be very close to the Cathedral. There is no Member of your Lordships' House who would be more unwilling than myself to see any damage done to our great cathedral, but I must say I think the right rev. Prelate has not made a case of throwing out the Bill on Second Reading.

*THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE: My Lords I desire to say a few words for the purpose of contributing a little support from my own experience to the case made by the right rev. Prelate. For 10 years of my life I had the custody of a cathedral not so important as that of St. Paul's, still one of our most glorious and historic cathedrals; I mean the cathedral of Ely. It so happened that about 35 years ago, I think, some improvements by way of drainage were carried out in the city of Ely. That was a great improvement, no doubt, to the whole town and for the comfort and health of the inhabitants; but it so happened that the cathedral of Ely stands upon a bed of sand, and the sand being saturated with water very much in the manner that has been described in this case by the right rev. Prelate, the effect of that drainage was, among other things, to let out a great deal of the water from the sandy stratum and to draw away the water from underneath the cathedral. When I was Dean of Ely Cathedral we had a great deal of trouble with regard to cracks and evidences of settlement appearing in different parts of the cathedral. I had a good deal to do with the expenditure in underpinning and making good the defects where there had been subsidences, and there was very great expenditure entailed by the delicate process of rebuilding flying buttresses. I am not sufficiently scientific to absolutely state the truth of what I now suggest, but the Clerk of the Works who had charge of the building, and in whom I had very great confidence, always attributed the difficulties which we experienced with regard to the cathedral to the fact of the drainage, which had taken place a few years before. I think myself that was very probably the cause. Certainly we had settlements and cracks in the building, which gave us a great deal of trouble, and no other cause was ever suggested except that which I have mentioned. Now, I think, my Lords, the phenomena which we experienced in Ely were exactly the same as may be anticipated here. If you drain away the water from the strata below, you will drain away a good deal of the support, and have, of course, cracks and subsidences in the superincumbent edifice. As far as the case of the cathedral goes, I myself feel very much disposed to support the right rev. Prelate, and I think the speech which we have just heard from a noble Lord tends very much to support the argument which preceded it. Because, what did the noble Lord opposite tell us? He gave us figures which entirely agreed with those mentioned by the right rev. Prelate, and all he did in addition was to say that he doubted very much that any mischief could happen. We ought not to allow St. Paul's Cathedral to depend upon a doubt; we must have certainty or something very much approaching certainty, before we can consent that the grandest, and, in some respects, the most important ecclesiastical building in the kingdom, a building with which the pride of the nation is bound up more than with any other, should suffer the smallest probability of having to undergo any risk.

*LORD SUDELEY: My Lords, the Motion of the right rev. Prelate seems to me to be one which is most unusual upon a Bill of this importance. It is, I believe, almost without precedent, and I venture to think that the right rev. Prelate has not made out his case. My Lords, what are the facts of the matter? This Bill is not a Bill which comes up to your Lordships for the first time. It is a Bill which comes up from the other House, having been thoroughly investigated in Committee. It has been most thoroughly debated upon two other occasions, and certainly it seems to me that if your Lordships refuse to allow it to go to a Committee you are liable to be charged with a grave act of discourtesy, and I venture to think it will be a course which it would be most unusual for your Lordships to adopt. The right rev. Prelate has undoubtedly made out, from his point of view, a strong case. He has spoken with deep conviction, and none of your Lordships can doubt that he has done so, feeling that it is his duty to make that protest; and he has made out, on the part of the opponents, undoubtedly, a case which, if it is true, is very strong. But, my Lords, it does seem to me, if the right rev. Prelate is correct in all his views, that is the very reason which would induce your Lordships to send it to a Committee of Inquiry. Surely, if he is right, in his own interest and in the interest of those who oppose the Bill, it is far better that the matter should be thoroughly threshed out; and if there is any danger to St. Paul's Cathedral, it should be shown at once, and then we shall hear no more about it. But, my Lords, what are the facts of the matter? The right rev. Prelate has based his opposition entirely on the ground that there is a danger to St. Paul's from the construction of this railway. This question came before the Committee of the other House; it was most thoroughly gone into by that Committee, and they had before them three great engineers, Sir John Fowler, Sir Benjamin Baker, and Mr. Greathead. Those three enginneers proved to the satisfaction of the Committee that there was not the slightest danger to the foundations of St. Paul's Cathedral. The right rev. Prelate has gone somewhat into an engineering discourse. He has stated, in the first place, that you cannot liken this in any way to the case of the Metropolitan District Railway which was made near Westminster Abbey. My Lords, it is somewhat interesting to remember that about 25 years ago in that matter a very similar discussion occurred. It was then shown that the Metropolitan District Railway would be constructed within 70 feet of Westminster Abbey and within 23 feet of Westminster Hospital, and that enormous danger would accrue to the foundations of those structures. But your Lordships are aware that no harm whatever has arisen. The right rev. Prelate says that was a totally different case, and that, in that case, the Metropolitan District Railway was only constructed at a very shallow distance from the surface, whereas, in this case, you are to have a railway 53 feet below the surface, and that, therefore, there is very great danger of damage from the drainage of the water. But, my Lords, if you are to consider the question in that light, you must remember the facts of the case. The proposal in this Bill is not that you should go into any stratum which would cause danger, but that you should go through the blue clay. The right rev. Prelate speaks of the tube through which this railway is to pass as being of far larger diameter than the London and Southwark Subway, that, whereas that has only a diameter of 11 feet, this is to be a tube of 29 feet diameter. Well, my Lords, as a matter of fact, I think the right rev. Prelate is entirely wrong in his statement. The two tubes are certainly only 11 feet each in diameter. Though I think there is very little necessity for me to go into the facts, still, as the right rev. Prelate has mentioned this matter I think I ought to make some reference to it. My Lords, the proposal under this Bill is that the railway should go within 250 feet at its nearest point of St. Paul's Cathedral; not 70 feet, as it was in the case of the Metropolitan District Railway in regard to Westminster Abbey. You have the highest engineering authorities saying there is not the slightest danger. My Lords, I think that shows, at any rate, there is another side to the question, whether right or wrong I will not say, but it certainly shows there is another aspect of the question which justifies an investigation before one of your Lordships' Committees. The noble Lord who spoke before me referred to the congestion of the traffic. The whole object of this Bill is to relieve the congested traffic in this great Metropolis. There can be no doubt, as probably any of your Lordships who take an interest in the matter are aware, that the traffic in London is growing to a most fearful extent. The number of omnibuses and cabs, which are increasing day by day, has become a great danger to all pedestrians; and I think, if there were no other ground for supporting this Bill, your Lordships would hardly refuse to give it a Second Reading when you consider that important point. I think it must be admitted that everyone who has watched the growth of our traffic must come to the conclusion that before long we must either have overhead railway accommodation or further underground railway communication. What I venture to suggest to your Lordships is this: that come what may, this Bill should now be read a second time, and that it should then be referred to one of your Lordships' Committees, where the measure can be thoroughly threshed out.

*THE BISHOP OF LONDON: I should like to say when I mentioned that the diameter of the tunnel was to be 29 feet, I meant that it would be so at the station and that the excavation for the station, and shafts would be an additional danger; that is to say, that the station would be, as regards distance, an addition to the tunnel.

THE EARL OF MORLEY: I am sure your Lordships will not be surprised at the objection which has been taken by the right rev. Prelate, who watches over the fabric of St. Paul's Cathedral, or that he has taken the somewhat unusual course of moving the rejection of the Second Reading of this Bill from a strict sense of duty. I quite sympathise with, and I am sure your Lordships will share in, his anxiety to protect the grand fabric of that Cathedral from every risk of danger. But, my Lords, the question is, are we in a position to judge whether this is a risk or not? I listened to the rev. Prelate's speech and to the testimony that he produced to your Lordships. All that, no doubt, is very interesting engineering and geological evidence, which cannot be tested here, but which could be tested before one of those tribunals to which your Lordships refer Bills of this description. I will not express the slightest opinion as to the validity or invalidity of the reasons which the right rev. Prelate has alleged for saying that the construction of such a railway would be a risk to the fabric of St. Paul's; but I do maintain very strongly that it would not be right for the House to diverge from its usual practice on this occasion and to reject this Bill on Second Reading without giving both the promoters and opponents of it an opportunity of being heard before a Select Committee. The Bill was fought very thoroughly before the House of Commons; a Committee of that House sat very nearly a month, I think, considering it, and then the Bill was sent up with certain Amendments and certain safeguards, as was considered, to your Lordships' House. I do not for a moment anticipate what the decision of a Select Committee might be, whether it might conclude to pass the Bill or not, or, if it did pass the Bill, whether or not it might think fit to introduce certain other safeguards in it; but this I do say, that it would be a very unfortunate course to take, especially after what has occurred in another place, if your Lordships did not give an opportunity for further investigation.

*THE EARL OF MEATH: My Lords, I am sure we must all sympathise with the right rev. Prelate who has introduced this Motion. The right rev. Prelate is at the head of the Diocese of London, and not only is he at the head of the Diocese of London, but he is a very eminent leader of the Church of England, and he would not have been performing his duty if he had not, with the feeling which he entertains, brought this question to your Lordships' notice. But, my Lords, I doubt very much whether he has proved his case. I myself think he has not done so, and the only point in which I differ from my noble Friend Lord Sudeley is that Lord Sudeley said he thought the right rev. Prelate had made out a strong case. Now, I cannot make out how Lord Sudeley could say that he had made out a strong case, inasmuch as the right rev. Prelate has not given us a single engineering authority to bear out what he has stated. He has referred to the opinions of eminent architects; but, on the other hand, the promoters of this Bill have brought forward as evidence the opinions of two of the greatest engineers the world knows—Sir John Fowler and Sir Benjamin Baker. Those men would not risk their reputation—a reputation which is dear to them—by telling the Committee of the House of Commons there is not the smallest danger in what the company propose to do if they had thought there was danger. Sir Benjamin Baker went so far as to say that even if there were an open cutting made there would be no danger to the foundations of St. Paul's Cathedral. My Lords, we have heard a great deal about St. Paul's Cathedral being erected on sand and gravel strata. But the promoters tell us that the tunnel is to run through the clay below. If the arguments of the right rev. Prelate are worth anything, they would go to show that the deeper the tunnel is driven the greater is the danger to be apprehended. He told us there was a parallel instance in the case of the Metropolitan District Railway running near Westminster Abbey; but that it was so near the surface that no danger had been incurred, and that, in fact, the danger increases with the depth to which you go. I am unable to give an opinion upon this question; but I do not think your Lordships are able to give an opinion upon it either. The whole question is one which I think ought to be discussed in Committee, and not in this House. We ought to have before that Committee the evidence of the greatest engineers we can find, and, of course, if it can be proved to the Committee that there is danger to the structure of the Cathedral, there is no one, I suppose, in your Lordships' House who would not immediately vote for throwing out the Bill. But I say it would be wrong for this House to go directly in the face of what was done in the House of Commons, where there was no Division even taken upon it. Its opponents were so few that there was not, I believe, a third person in the House to oppose it. My Lords, greater means of communication are wanted in this Metropolis. We have only to go along Oxford Street to see the congested state of the traffic there. There are only three ways of relieving it. One is by overhead communication, as they have in New York, which I do not think would be permitted in this Metropolis. Some of your Lordships may have travelled by the overhead railway in New York, and, though it may be exceedingly convenient to those who may desire to travel by it, it undoubtedly lowers the value of the houses below and makes privacy impossible in them. I am perfectly certain that the shopkeepers in Oxford Street, who, as I understand, are now opposing this Bill, would be the last to desire to have a railway passing down their thoroughfare; we know that the road is already so very much congested that it is almost impossible for the cabs and omnibuses to pass along it. If neither overhead nor surface communication are available to us, the only way of relieving the traffic is by an underground railway. The population of London has increased during the last 24 years some 60 per cent., and I believe that the number of passengers who travel annually has increased some 700 per cent. The Committee of the House of Commons were quite alive to the necessity of proceeding with great caution, and they put into the Bill a clause by which no action was to be taken, and, indeed, no money was to be raised until three months after the City and Southwark subway had been completed, so that there might be some experience obtained before any steps were taken to make this underground railway. I should have liked individually if the Committee had forced the company to pay some compensation for the monopoly of the sub-soil, but that is a matter for Committee, and therefore is one which I will not introduce here. I think, also, that the arguments of the right rev. Prelate were entirely arguments which ought to have been introduced in Committee, and I hope, therefore, your Lordships will not assent to the Motion of the right rev. Prelate.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK): My Lords, the question before your Lordships is so interesting and important, that perhaps I may be pardoned for suggesting a course which, if taken, might possibly meet the views of all the Members of your Lordships' House. It seems to me that, besides the interested parties in this matter, if one may call them so—that is to say, those who have the custody of the Cathedral—there is a very large interest outside among the public, who have a great regard for that building as an ornament and grace to the Metropolis. It seems to me, if we let this Bill go in the ordinary course before a Committee; if that Committee were called upon to make a special Report to us, in case they may find that the Bill may be safely passed without fear of harm being done to St. Paul's Cathedral, they should lay before us the grounds on which they have come to that conclusion. At present we are discussing the Bill entirely in the dark. I do not know anything of what passed in the House of Commons, nor have I had the means of making myself acquainted with it, and I suppose none of your Lordships are in a better position in that respect than myself. I am quite sure, however, that if we had the Report of a Committee before us, we could then judge whether or not the grounds on which the Committee had proceeded were such as we could endorse or approve, and in that way we should be able to vote with knowledge on the Third Reading. If, on the other hand, a Committee of your Lordships' House should conclude that there was no ground for going on with the railway, and if they saw no reason to pass the Preamble, the Bill would not come back to us. But if it does come back, it is very desirable, I think, that it should come back upon a Special Report upon which the House could act with knowledge.

*THE EARL OF DERBY: My Lords, in rising to support what has been said by the noble Viscount opposite, with regard to referring the Bill, I would only suggest that it does not require a special Report from the Committee. What I think would answer all purposes is, that there should be an Order to the Committee that the evidence before it, including the printed notes of the arguments, should be circulated among the Members of this House, and in that way we should have the whole case before us and be able to form a judgment upon it.

*EARL FORTESCUE: My Lords, I only wish to say a few words upon this Motion. Many years ago, when there were urgent whips and great canvassing among Members of Parliament for the purpose of passing or rejecting Bills on Second Reading—Railway Bills particularly—and a Committee was appointed to consider the private business of the other House, I had the honour of being a member of that Committee. At this distance of time I have the liveliest recollection of the impression which I then carried away; that is, how extremely undesirable it was that, except in cases where the clearest principles were at stake for either House of Parliament to attempt to discuss points of engineering science, or to deal with matters which could only be satisfactorily dealt with before a Committee. The evils of the other system are palpable, and the conclusion which I entreat your Lordships to come to is, as there is no question of principle involved here, to give this Bill a Second Reading, and then to let it go before one of your Lordships' Committees, where it can be freely discussed and scrutinised and evidence taken upon it.

*THE BISHOP OF LONDON: My Lords, I do not know that I should not be wise to accept the advice of the noble Viscount to refer the Bill for a special Report as to the absence of danger. I should, of course, reserve to myself the right of opposing the further progress of the Bill, if it should appear to me that the decision of the Committee was not quite in accordance with the wisest course.

Amendment (by leave of the House) withdrawn: Bill read 2^a, and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

HELIGOLAND.

QUESTION.—OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: My Lords, I desire to ask the noble Marquess a question of which I have given him private notice. I understand it is not his intention to make any statement to the House to-day with reference to the Agreement, published in yesterday's papers, which has taken place between this country and Germany in regard to the cession of Heligoland. I understand that he is not in a position to make a complete statement on the subject to-day; and, that being so, I would venture to ask him the question for the purpose of obtaining information. It is this — Has he, before agreeing to the cession of Heligoland, consulted the Military and Naval Authorities in regard to the expediency of such cession? I would further ask him if any steps have been taken, or are in contemplation, to ascertain the wishes of the Heligolanders themselves with regard to that transfer? I would also ask, though I have not given the noble Marquess notice of the question and therefore he will deal with it as he thinks best, when and where the Heligoland Transfer Bill will be introduced, and when we may expect to have further Papers on the subject?

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): My Lords, with respect to the first of the questions of the noble Earl, I have to reply that before coming to the decision which we have communicated to your Lordships we made ourselves acquainted with the opinions of those professional advisers who were in a position to give us advice upon the subject. The matter is more naval I should say than military. There are certain military points, but the naval question is the predominant one. With respect to the second question of the noble Earl, my answer must be in the negative. The *plébiscite* is not among the traditions of this country. We have not taken a *plébiscite*, and I see no necessity for doing so. At the same time, we have good ground for believing that if there has been expressed in past times any objection on the part of any of the inhabitants of Heligoland to this transfer, it has been mainly connected with the fear of a conscription; and if the noble Earl will read the Despatch which has been laid upon the Table he will observe that we have taken the precaution to stipulate that no person alive at the time of the cession shall be subject to obligatory military or naval service. With regard to the third question of the noble Earl as to the introduction of the Bill, I thought it would have been introduced into the House of Commons, but I see no objection to introducing it into this House. I doubt whether it can be laid on the Table until the Convention is signed, because naturally the Bill must refer to that. The Bill is necessarily a short one. With respect to Papers, I do not know what Papers the noble Earl speaks of; but, of course, any papers that we are able to lay before the House we shall be happy to place upon the Table. I presume the Convention is the principal Paper.

HERRING FISHERY (SCOTLAND) ACT (1889) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 75.)

Returned from the Commons with the amendments agreed to.

CLERGY DISCIPLINE (IMMORALITY) BILL.

A Bill for better enforcing church discipline in the case of crimes and other offences against morality—was presented by the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 134.)

SHERIFFS (ASSIZES EXPENSES) BILL.

An Act respecting the expenses of High Sheriffs in connection with assizes—Was presented by the Earl Camperdown; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 135.)

SETTLED LAND BILL.—(No. 99.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

LORD HERSCHELL: My Lords, I need detain your Lordships but a few moments in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, because it is so much a matter of detail that no doubt it will have to be considered in Committee. I should imagine there will be no objection to the Second Reading of the Bill. It has been prepared by the Incorporated Law Society, and is the result of the experience which has been obtained in the working of the Settled Land Act. Certain questions have arisen which it is desirable to settle, and it is considered expedient to give several powers which were not given in the first instance; but none of them are matters of very great gravity, or make any considerable change in the law. I do not propose to take your Lordships through every clause in the Bill, but merely to mention its principal provisions. Doubts have arisen where a rent-charge on the disentailment of an estate is created in favour of an eldest son when he is a disentailing party, whether that instrument is to be considered for the purposes of the Settled Land Act as constituting one instrument, together with the settlement proper, or whether it is to be regarded as an incumbrance. I think there is no doubt it was intended to be treated as part of the settlement; but doubt has arisen, and the 1st clause to which I will refer, Clause 4 of the Bill, removes that doubt, and provides that it shall be treated as one instrument. Under the Settled Land Act there is power on a sale under the Act to reserve an easement, but there is no power to do so when it is an exchange or partition, and not a sale. The same power is now reserved equally in that case. The next provision is to enable a tenant for life to carry out a contract which has been entered into by his predecessor in title. Before the transaction can be carried out under the contract, a sale may be made; but, pending its completion, if the vendor dies the proceedings would at present have to be taken all over again. Under this clause power is given to continue the proceedings and to convey the estate. Then the next provision makes this alteration: At present a lease can only be granted by the tenant for life after notice has been given to the Trustees of the settlement. The 7th clause in the Bill enables a lease, if it is for 21 years or less and at a rack-rent, to be made by the tenant for life without notice to the Trustees. Then there is a provision relating to the mansion house. Your Lordships are aware that there is an exception from the power of the tenant for life to sell under the Settled Land Act in that respect; he is unable to sell the mansion house. The 9th clause leaves that generally untouched, but it provides—

> "Where a house is usually occupied as a farm-house, or where the site of any house and the pleasure grounds and park and lands (if any) usually occupied therewith do not together exceed one hundred acres in extent, the house is not to be deemed a principal mansion house within the meaning of this section."

The next provision is one on which some question may possibly be raised. At present the tenant for life can sell land that is settled for the purpose of expending the money for which the land is so sold upon improvements as defined by the Settled Land Act. The 10th clause of the Bill proposes to enable a tenant for life to raise money by mortgage for those same purpose instead of selling a portion of the estate. Sometimes the sum required is very small, and the difficulty of selling a small portion of the estate for the purpose of raising the necessary money is great. It would be a very considerable convenience to the tenant for life, and an advantage to the estate itself if such sum could be raised by mortgage, instead of by the sale of a portion of the real estate. It does not alter the mode in which the money is to be applied. It would be useful also for another purpose. At present, if there are mortgages and charges upon an estate, a tenant for life may sell for the purpose of paying them off, but he could not re-mortgage the estate for the purpose of consolidating the mortgages and, perhaps, raising the money required for the purpose at a lower rate of interest than that payable under the existing mortgages. Your Lordships are aware that many estates may be charged with mortgages bearing interest considerably in excess of the rate at which borrowing could now take place, nevertheless the tenant for life is precluded from making a fresh borrowing for the purpose of paying off mortgages, though he could do so at a lower rate of interest. This clause is intended to give him that power. Then, the next provision is merely a matter of machinery, and I need not trouble your Lordships with it. The 12th clause extends in some measure the improvements upon which settled money may be expended; one is the construction of bridges which are necessary for the purpose of the estate, which are not now included; and the next provision enables the money to be expended in putting the estate into a condition in which it may reasonably be let to the best advantage. Then the 13th clause enables the Court, if it thinks fit, where money has been paid into Court, to order payment of it out to the Trustees. At present, when money once gets into Court, it cannot be got out again; whereas, under this provision, the Court may order it if it thinks fit. There is only one other clause with which I need trouble your Lordships. That provides that where there are no Trustees of the settlement within the meaning of the Act the persons here named shall be the Trustees. The persons named in the Bill are those who, when application is made to the Court, are the people who would be appointed. This provision is only to save the necessity of applying to the Court in each case to appoint Trustees, and it does not make any substantial change. It is only for the purpose of avoiding the expense of an application to the Court. Now, those are all the provisions of the Bill with which I need trouble your Lordships. No doubt they will have to receive more consideration when in Committte, and I trust your Lordships will give the Bill a Second Reading.

*THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, I am bound to say that, with regard to the greater part of this Bill, I am entirely in accord. I think a great many of its provisions will be useful amendments of the law. But there is one matter which I should like to refer to for a moment in regard to the 10th section of the Bill. That seems to me to be absolutely inconsistent with the whole policy of the Settled Land Act. By that Act, as your Lordships are no doubt aware, the tenant for life may, acting, as it were, for the person next in remainder, because he is improving the estate for him, sell portions of the estate for the purpose of obtaining money to enable him to carry out improvements. But the policy of allowing a tenant for life to mortgage for such purposes appears to me to raise very serious questions indeed, and I doubt whether so great on alteration should be made except upon a full discussion of the question after the Bill has been referred to Committee. It appears to me there are plenty of purposes for which a tenant for life may improve the estate, and he has power to raise money by sale for that purpose; but this Bill would give additional powers which ought to be very carefully considered before your Lordships agree that the tenant for life should be able, not only to sell part of the estate so that the next in remainder shall come into possession of an improved property, an estate increased in value, but that the next in remainder may possibly find he has come into possession of an estate encumbered by mortgages, which, if he could have been consulted, he would not have agreed to. That, my Lords, seems to me to raise a serious question of principle which your Lordships should look at and consider carefully apart from any question upon mere details; and I should think that the proper time to do so would be when the Bill comes back, if the Bill should come back from the Committee unamended in that respect. It would be then for your Lordships, sitting in Committee of the whole House, to consider that question.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: My Lords, I should like, as an ignorant and humble layman, to ask the noble and learned Lord for a little information with regard to the 9th clause, Sub-section 3. That clause appears to exempt from the restrictions originally imposed by the Settled Land Act, 1882, two classes of houses; one where a house is usually occupied as a farmhouse, and the other where the site of any house and the pleasure grounds, and park, and lands usually occupied therewith, do not together exceed 100 acres in extent. When that is the case, as I read the Bill, those two classes of houses are capable of being sold, at the will of the tenant for life. If that be the right interpretation, it appears to me this Bill strikes at the root of the restrictions imposed in the Settled Land Act of 1882. There may be great ambiguity in the words "usually occupied as a farmhouse.' The tenant for life may be on bad terms with his heir; he may waste the estate, and may cause the mansion house to be occupied as a farmhouse; and that may go on for a long period, for his life may not be a short one. So much for the words "usually occupied as a farmhouse." Then the second category seems to me to be still more objectionable. It is, I think, very insidious, because it provides that this may be done—

"Where the site of any house, and the pleasure grounds, and park, and lands (if any) usually occupied therewith do not together exceed 100 acres in extent."

My Lords, I do not know the exact acreage of the various parks throughout the country; but there, again, it would be open to the tenant for life, as it seems to me, to reduce the size of his park, and then, when that reduction has been made and has existed for a greater or longer period, that is also to be taken out of the category of a principal mansion house within the meaning of the original Act, so as to deal with that portion of the property without consulting the wishes of those entitled in remainder. My Lords, if I am right in my interpretation of this clause, the number of mansion houses which would be left unaffected in regard to the restrictions imposed by the Settled Land Act, would be so small that it would be better to repeal those provisions altogether than to leave them in existence as provisions which are altogether illusory. I may be wrong, of course, in this; but it appears to me there is no such source of danger as there being supposed to exist a protecttion which is illusory. If my interpretation is correct, this clause, though it may seem thoroughly satisfactory upon paper, yet, when tested by the rapacity which does sometimes exist in the case of a tenant for life, and which must *ex hypothesi* exist, will really prove very mischievous, and render the protection which is supposed to be given of no value at all. I shall be very glad to hear from the noble and learned Lord that I am mistaken in my interpretation; but if I am not, then I think it would be a far more straightforward course to move at once for the repeal of the restrictions in this respect under the Settled Land Act, rather than to leave laymen under the impression that they enjoy a security which it will be found they really do not enjoy as against a hostile tenant for life.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I think it says very much for the humility of human nature, considering that we are all, or nearly all of us, tenants for life, to find what a deep distrust we seem to have of people in that position. We appear to consider that they are always about, or are willing, to commit some great crime, but I think tenants for life are a better class, on the whole, than my noble Friend Earl Beauchamp may think. What I wish to ask the noble and learned Lord opposite is, whether there are any means of defining what comes under the description of pleasure grounds and park. I have often, myself, seen cases where, if the grass in a man's park is not going on well, he will put it under turnips. Does it cease to be a park then? Viewing the matter in that way, the limitation appears to be one that nobody could rely upon, and, I think, might mislead.

LORD HERSCHELL: My Lords, with reference to the question which has been asked by the noble Earl, I would first state, generally, what the object of this section is. The language of the Settled Land Act is, that "it is not to apply to the principal mansion house (if any) or the settled land." That, obviously, was not intended to cover every house, however small, but was to be applied in the spirit of it to the residence in connection with the land. However small it was, that was the principle of it. It was supposed to apply to cases of an estate of some considerable character or size having such a house upon it. Now, the scheme of this section is, that where in reality it does not come within the spirit of the Settled Land Act, where you have a house occupied with only a small portion of land attached, that then it should not be regarded as a principal mansion house within the meaning of the Act. Of course, it may be considered that the area of 100 acres taken here is too large, and that it ought to be reduced. That is a matter of detail which I will not go into at present; but I will say, in answer to the question of the noble Earl, that I do not think any tenant for life, by altering the character of the holding, and by saying that any portion of the property had been usually occupied in a particular way, could bring himself within the section and so entitles himself to sell. I think, in considering for what purpose that portion of the property has been usually occupied, you would have to look to the period during which, and the purposes for which, the land had been held with the house in the past, and not how it happened to be occupied at the particular moment. With regard to the question of the noble Marquess, I would point out that the provision is not with regard merely to pleasure grounds and parks, but that it is land usually held with the house; that is, throughout. If a portion of what had been a park was turned into something which was not strictly park, yet, if it was part of the land which had been usually held with the house, it would still come within those words, although it had ceased to be park and then filled some other character. The provision is that, notwithstanding the Act of 1882,

> "The principal mansion house (if any) on any settled land, and the pleasure grounds and park and lands (if any) usually occupied therewith, shall not be sold, exchanged, or leased by the tenant for life without the consent of the trustees of the settlement or an order of the Court."

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Then, if a man farms the whole of his land, he cannot sell it.

LORD HERSCHELL: In that case, if it exceeded that amount, he could not sell without the leave of the Court. It would come under the restrictions of the Settled Land Act. At present the mansion house can only be sold under the order of the Court. The power of the tenant for life is limited if the lands usually held with the house exceed the 100 acres, as provided, for whatever purposes they might be occupied. That case would come within the scope of the Act and not within the exceptions.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: Do I understand the noble and learned Lord to say that a tenant for life, having let his park, which is not at all unfrequently the case, for a term of years, as he is entitled to do, the principal mansion house and the whole estate would be then exempted from the restrictions of the Settled Land Act, but little land being actually occupied with the mansion house, so that he might sell the principal mansion house of a very large and ornamental estate without consulting the remainder-man?

LORD HERSCHELL: I do not think he would. It certainly was not intended that he should. However, after what the noble Earl has said, I may say that I shall take care, if possible, to see that that point is made clear.

Bill read 2ª (according to order).

LORD HERSCHELL: I now move that this Bill be committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: My Lords, this is, I think, a matter which your Lordships ought to consider in Committee of the whole House. Of course, there are technical points to be dealt with; but I would point out that this is a matter which concerns your Lordships as landowners. Is it not a matter in which, before the details are settled, your Lordships should agree upon the principle involved in the clauses of this Bill? I hope your Lordships will send the Bill to a Committee of the whole House, and then it can afterwards, if necessary, be referred to the Standing Committee on Law.

LORD HERSCHELL: Surely that is hardly necessary. Nine-tenths of this Bill refer to technical matters of detail in which there is no question of principle involved, and surely it would be better to consider the Bill in Standing Committee, and then, when it comes back to your Lordships, it will be in the form in which it has been finally settled. The noble Earl himself has already suggested that even if this 9th clause be right in principle, it ought to be altered in form. Surely the measure ought to be put in the best form for the consideration of the House, and then, when it comes back to the Committee of the whole House, it will be for your Lordships to omit any of the clauses or amend them. That seems to be a more reasonable course than to consider it now in Committee of the whole House. Your Lordships will then have a carefully-prepared draft before you.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: I do not know that I have any right to reply; but, as far as the drafting is concerned, I have that confidence in the noble and learned Lord that I do not know that whatever may be done in this Committee will improve his handiwork.

Bill committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

FOREIGN JURISDICTION (CONSOLIDATION) BILL.—(No. 109.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

*THE LORD CHANCELLOR: This is merely a Consolidation Bill upon the subject of foreign jurisdiction. As the object of it is merely to consolidate the Acts of Parliament, I anticipate no objection. Under ordinary circumstances, I should ask your Lordships to take this Bill in Committee of the whole House; but as it involves, by reason of the consolidation, some small Amendments of the law, I think it would be better that it should go before the Committee on Law.

Read 2ª (according to order), and committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

EDUCATION OF BLIND AND DEAF-MUTE CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL.
(No. 123.)

Read 3ª (according to order); Amendments made; Bill passed and sent to the Commons.

KEW AND PETERSHAM VICARAGE BILL.—(No. 77.)

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 119.)

House in Committee (on Re-commitment) (according to order); Bills reported without Amendment; and to be read 3ª to-morrow.

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock till to-morrow a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 19th June, 1890.

QUESTIONS.

TYPE-WRITTEN PETITIONS.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Walsall, (Sir C. Forster), as Chairman of the Committee on Public Petitions, whether his attention has been called to the fact that certain Petitions, the bodies of which are written by a type-writing machine, have been returned to the Members presenting them, with an intimation that, being informal, they would not be submitted to the Committee, and whether the Committee has ever decided the question as to whether type-written Petitions should or should not be considered as regular; and, if not, whether, considering the inexpediency of unnecessarily restricting the right of public petitioning, he will use his influence with the Committee to accord to type-written Petitions the same treatment as to written ones?

*SIR C. FORSTER (Walsall) stated that certain Petitions had been returned to the members who had presented them, under the Standing Order against Petitions "in print or lithograph," the clerk to the Committee being of opinion that the Petitions in question were not written in the sense required by the Orders of the House, and that he could not, therefore, submit them to the Committee. In answer to the further question of his hon. Friend, he had to state that the Committee had determined that these Petitions were not regular, and could not be received, but that it was competent to him to move a modification of the Standing Order in a future Session.

DR. CAMERON: I beg to give notice that next Session I will move to amend the Standing Order to which the hon. Member refers.

CONDEMNED ADMIRALTY MEAT.

DR. CAMERON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the assurance given by him, on the 5th instant, in relation to the disposal of beef and pork by the Admiralty applies to all beef and pork deemed unfit for issue or re-issue to Her Majesty's ships, seeing that the answer given on the 5th instant specifies in terms only one part of such beef and pork?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I am glad to have the opportunity of publicly assuring the hon. Gentleman that in referring to "condemned" salt beef or pork I intended it to be understood that all such meat, whether actually unfit for food or not, considered unsuitable for issue or re-issue to Her Majesty's ships, would not be sold by public sale, but would all be delivered, after the chemical treatment I have already described, to contractors for use in the soap-boiling trade.

NAVAL ENGINEERS.

CAPTAIN PRICE (Devonport): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, considering the unsatisfactory position of the whole *personnel* of the steam branch of the Navy, as evinced by the fact that several engineer officers of high rank have recently left the Service to obtain better salaries in private employ; that great difficulty is experienced in obtaining suitable men as engine-room artificers, and also as stokers, and that dissatisfaction with their pay and position exists throughout the various classes, he will consider the propriety of appointing a Departmental Committee to inquire thoroughly into the position of this section of the *personnel* of the Navy?

LORD G. HAMILTON: The Admiralty have no difficulty in obtaining suitable men as stokers and engine-room artificers, and only quite recently the 1,700 additional second-class stokers required on account of the increase to the Fleet were raised with great ease. The advantages offered to the stokers are sufficient to attract satisfactory recruits, whilst the pay and position of the engine room artificers have attracted an excellent class of mechanics. As regards the engineer officers, it is certainly true that one or two gentlemen have recently resigned their commissions in order to take appointments with private firms; but this has been, and always will be the case, and is not confined to this branch of the Service, but occurs in other Departments and Services of the State. Under the circumstances, I do not consider that any Departmental inquiry into the position of this branch of the *personnel* of the Navy is required, for I am confident the more I look into the subject that no difficulty will be experienced in obtaining an ample supply of eligible candidates for the engineering branch of the Navy.

THE CUSTOMS.

MR. JORDAN (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether any examinations for appointments in the Customs Department have been held for the past three years; and whether any examinations of Customs candidates will again be held; and, if so, will he say when?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): Examinations for Customs boatmen have been held within the last three years, and one examination for out-door officers. With these exceptions there have been no examinations for Customs appointments within the last three years, and I am informed that it will probably not be necessary to hold any for some time to come.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Does the answer of the right hon. Gentleman also refer to the Excise?

MR. JACKSON: No; it only refers to the Customs.

NEW POLICE COURT FOR WANDSWORTH.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he proposes to approve the plans for the erection of the new Police Court for Wandsworth on the Lavender Hill site, having regard to the fact that that site is a mile outside of Wandsworth; and whether he is aware that the Chief Magistrate is of opinion that the Lavender Hill site is not in the best position for the business, and that the proposed removal of the site so far from Wandsworth itself, has occasioned great dissatisfaction there?

MR. OCTAVIUS V. MORGAN (Battersea): Will the erection of the new Police Court for the Wandsworth district, at Lavender Hill, near Clapham Junction, be commenced about August, as stated on 21st April last?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): A Departmental Committee, which included Lord Rosebery, Sir E. Henderson, and Sir J. Ingham, reported in 1881 that a new Court ought to be erected as near as possible to Clapham Junction. The Wandsworth District Board of Works more than once, in 1887, strongly urged upon me the desirability of this being done. A new site was accordingly acquired, with the concurrence of the then Chief Magistrate and the Commissioner of Police, at Lavender Hill, which is not more than 400 yards from the Clapham Junction Railway Station. It is doubtful whether this site could now be disposed of except at a loss. It is true that Sir John Bridge has expressed doubts as to the convenience of the new site. The plans are now before me for approval, and in the ordinary course the building will commence early in August. Under all the circumstances I do not think it will be to the public advantage to re-open the question of the site now that matters have progressed so far, and there being such a weight of opinion in favour of the suitability of that particular site.

SCOTCH UNIVERSITY CHAIRS.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Scottish University Commissioners, who are understood to have already taken much evidence on the question of the changes to be introduced into the conditions attaching to the Chairs in the Faculty of Divinity, propose to present at an early period the Special Report to Her Majesty upon this matter, which they are directed to make by the Universities (Scotland) Act of 1889?

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. M. T. STORMONTH DARLING, Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities): The Commissioners are fully alive to the expediency of presenting the Special Report upon this matter so soon as they are in a position to do so, but it is impossible for them at present to fix any date, as they are still engaged in hearing evidence.

MASSACRE OF CHRISTIANS IN MACEDONIA.

MR. BRYCE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has now at length received any information regarding the massacre of a large number (in some accounts estimated at 80) of Christian refugees by Mohammedan Arnauts, which was stated a fortnight ago in many Continental and English newspapers to have taken place in the district of Kossovo, in North West Macedonia, and also regarding the conduct of the Turkish Local Authorities, who are reported in some of these accounts to have connived at the slaughter of the refugees.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): No confirmation has yet been received of the report, which appears to have originated at Munich, but inquiry will be made as to whether there is any foundation for it. I may be permitted to take this opportunity of stating, with reference to a question of the hon. Member, in regard to certain

> "Accounts which had appeared in the newspapers of horrible cruelties stated to have been perpetrated upon Armenian Christians in the district of Khanos, between Bitlis and Erzeroum,"

that Her Majesty's Consul has reported that the inquiries which he has made lead him to believe that there was no loss of life during the attack which was made in the valley of Alashgerd upon certain labourers on their return from Russian territory, and that over £100 of the money carried away by the Kurds has been recovered, and four of the offenders are in custody. The persons attacked appear to have been Nestorians, and the attack to have taken place between Bayazaid and the Russian frontier.

MR. BRYCE: Has the right hon. Gentleman obtained the information which was promised 10 days ago with reference to a reported massacre in Macedonia? It is alleged that this outrage was perpetrated with a view of exacting money.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I am sorry that the hon. Gentleman did not make it plain what his purpose was. I will make further inquiry.

BRIXHAM HARBOUR.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has received a Memorial from the Commissioners of the Brixham Harbour and Market asking for a Provisional Order for the purpose of defining the manner in which the market tolls are to be dealt with, and generally to amend the Law as to the funds arising from the market; and whether the Board of Trade has any power to act as prayed in such Memorial?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I have received the Memorial referred to by the hon. Member, but the Board of Trade have no power to deal with the matter.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the state of the Brixham Market funds; whether the Local Government Board can, under Section 303 of "The Public Health Act, 1875," by Provisional Order, amend the Local Act, 1 Vic. c. 75; and whether any inquiry has been made into the case of Brixham Market by the Royal Commission on Market Rights and Tolls; and, if not, whether he will communicate to the Royal Commission the Memorial presented to the Board of Trade by the Commissioners of the Harbour and Market of Brixham?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Local Government Board receive from the Brixham Market Commissioners an annual Return of the receipts and expenditure of the undertaking, for the purpose of the Local Taxation Returns, which are presented to Parliament. My attention has not otherwise been drawn to the state of the funds of the market. The Board would be empowered by the Public Health Act to alter the Local Act on the application of the Sanitary Authority of the district, if, as I believe is the case, the Act does not confer powers or privileges on any persons for their own pecuniary benefit. I understand that there has been no local inquiry by the Royal Commission on Market Rights and Tolls with reference to the market in question. I have no information as to the Memorial which has been presented to the Board of Trade by the Market Commissioners, but I will direct the attention of that Department to the suggestion contained in the question of the hon. Member.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: The President of the Board of Trade says that he has no power. Assuming that no power exists, either in the Board of Trade or the Local Government Board, will the President of the Board of Trade forward the Memorial he has received to the Royal Commission?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I shall be quite ready to do so.

THE METROPOLITAN POLICE.

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Goverement, taking into consideration the onerous and wearing nature of the Metropolitan Police, and the opinion of experienced authorities that 25 years' performance of such duties generally unfits a man for any other employment, will introduce a provision into the Police Bill entitling every Metropolitan police officer and constable, after 25 years' "approved service," to a pension equal to two-thirds of his pay, without condition of age or medical certificate?

MR. MATTHEWS: The Government have embodied in the Police Superannuation Bill now before the House the proposals which, after careful consideration, they recommend the House to adopt. My hon. Friend asks me whether the Government will alter those proposals; but I think he must feel that it would be unusual and inconvenient to anticipate the discussion which must take place in Committee on the Bill, when the Government will be prepared to state the reasons which have actuated them, and to discuss any Amendments that my hon. Friend may think it right to propose. I may point out that the scale of the Government Bill is identical with that which was recommended by the Select Committee of 1877, proposed in the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, and adopted in the City Police Bill of last year

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that the pay of the City Police is considerably higher than the pay of the Metropolitan Police? I desire to give notice that in Committee upon this Bill I will move an Amendment embodying the terms contained in my question.

MR. MATTHEWS: I am afraid that I cannot reply to the question in detail, without notice. I will, however, make full inquiry into the question if the hon. Member will put down another question.

GAS AND WATER UNDERTAKINGS.

MR. OCTAVIUS V. MORGAN: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether Local Authorities have power to transfer gas or water undertakings, acquired by them by Provisional Order or Act of Parliament, without statutory powers; and, if not, whether the provisions the Board of Trade have inserted in Electric Lighting Orders now before the House, enabling Local

Authorities to transfer undertakings to be authorised by those Orders, are *ultra vires*?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I am not aware that Local Authorities have any power to transfer gas or water undertakings acquired by Provisional Order or Act of Parliament without statutory authority; but provisions have been inserted, in accordance with the powers of the general Acts, in the Electric Lighting Orders, granted this Session, authorising Local Authorities to transfer their powers and liabilities to any company or person with the consent of, and upon terms to be approved by, the Board of Trade. I am advised that such provisions are not *ultra vires.*

"SHADOWING" POSTMEN.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been called to a paragraph in the *Evening News and Post*, in which it is stated that, while two postmen were walking home on Friday night last, one of them was seized by the throat by an overseer of the Eastern District Post Office, with the object of turning down the man's collar in order to get his number; whether he is aware that the man assaulted was suspected of attending the Postmen's Union meetings, and that this overseer had been shadowing him all the evening in order to report him for punishment; and whether the Post Office Authorities have power to engage overseers on such work?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): So far as I have been able to ascertain, the statement in the paragraph to which the hon. Member refers is absolutely without foundation. I am not aware that any one was assaulted, or that any one, to use the hon. Member's words, was shadowed, and think it in the highest degree improbable.

BURIALS IN WALES.

MR. G. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received a letter from the Rev. Evan Davies, Wesleyan minister, of Conway, with reference to the burial of William Williams in the churchyard of Gyffon parish, directly contradicting the information supplied by the Rev. Thomas Ellis, rector of the parish, to the Home Secretary, that he (the rector) had received no notice of burial such as the Act of 1880 required when the relatives wish to dispense with the Church Service, and enclosing a copy of the notice of burial actually served on the rector; whether it is in such letter alleged, contrary to the statement of the rector, that he (Rev. Evan Davies), and not the rector, was authorised by the widow of the deceased to conduct the burial service; and whether, in view of the grave scandal occasioned in the neighbourhood by the incident above referred to, he will direct an inquiry to be made into all the circumstances of the case?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir; I have received such a letter. When I stated, in answer to a former question, that "the rector had received no notice of burial under the Act of 1880," I appear to have misunderstood the words used in the rector's letter to me, which were that he had received no intimation that there existed a desire to bury the deceased under that Act. It now appears that the rector did receive such notice from Mr. Davies, but the deceased, being a non-parishioner, the Act of 1880 did not apply, and the notice was, therefore, in the rector's opinion, null and void. The rector, to whom I have referred Mr. Davies' letter, emphatically reaffirms that he was distinctly authorised by various relatives, but, not, as I understand, by the widow, to conduct the service; and it was to meet their earnest wishes that he finally consented to conduct the service according to the rites of the Church of England. The facts in my possession do not show that any breach of the law has been committed. There is, accordingly, no occasion for any futher interference on my part.

MR. G. OSBORNE MORGAN: As a matter of law, is it competent for a clergyman to make the interment of any person, whether a parishioner or not, in the parish churchyard conditional upon his friends abandoning their legal rights under the Burials Act of 1880?

MR. MATTHEWS: I think it would be safer to refer, upon a question of law, to the Attorney General.

LIABILITY OF COUNTY COUNCILS.

MR. RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he intends to introduce any legislation this Session to clear up the existing doubt as to the liability of County Councils to pay for the repair of the side-walks of roads and foot pavements of streets when such roads and streets are accepted as main roads?

*MR. RITCHIE: My hon. Friend is, no doubt, aware of the decision of the Queen's Bench Division on the question as to the repair of footways of streets when such streets are main roads. I have no information as to whether it is the intention to appeal against the judgment in that case; but however that may be, I cannot hold out any expectation that the Government will propose legislation on the question during the present Session.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that only two parts out of six of the Returns relating to Friendly Societies, with abstracts of the quinquennial Returns, have been published, though the Returns relate to the year 1886 and previous years; whether he can inform the House when the other four parts, C, D, E, and F, of Part II., will be issued to Members of this House; and whether, considering the time that has elapsed, he will consent to lay upon the Table of this House a complete abstract of those Returns, with such particulars as to the number of Societies, number of members, amount of funds, and similar information, at an early date?

A LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. MAXWELL, Wigton): The two parts, A and B, already issued, contain the information relating to the great affiliated Orders, such as the Manchester Unity and the Foresters, representing about two-thirds of the whole of the Branch Returns. Of the forthcoming parts, I am informed that C is ready for press; D is already in manuscript; E is in hand, and I therefore think that the proposal of the hon. Member would not really attain his object. I should say that, although the Returns relate to the year 1886, many of them are not received until much later.

IRELAND—NAVIGATION OF THE RIVER FERGUS.

MR. COX (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether certain communications addressed to the Prime Minister by Clare Castle Harbour Trustees, relating to the Navigation of the River Fergus, have been re-directed to him; and, if so, what steps he proposes to take in order to meet the request of the Trustees?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The papers referred to were forwarded to me. I am unable to propose any steps in the matter, which is one not for the Irish Government but for the Treasury, who appear to have informed the Trustees that they are unable to provide the desired grant.

OPEN-AIR PREACHING AT ARKLOW.

MR. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the condition of things in the County Wicklow; that a Mr. Hoffe and Mr. Harper, together with many of the respectable residents of the town of Arklow, in their attempt at holding a religious service on the commons some quarter of a mile from the town were molested by a mob; that a District Inspector of the Royal Irish Constabulary and a constable, instead of securing for these gentlemen the right of holding the service, took their names, and in no way interfered with the action of the mob; that subsequently the Rev. Mr. Hallowes was hooted through the town, and some Protestant ladies were similarly treated; and would he take steps to secure for Her Majesty's subjects in that part of Ireland the free exercise of their privilege as citizens when they were infringing no laws, and instruct the officers and men of the Royal Irish Constabulary in their duty to afford protection to all citizens in the exercise of their undoubted civil and religious rights?

MR. W. CORBET (Wicklow, E.): May I ask if the attention of the right hon. Gentleman has been called to this disturbance, as reported in the *Times* of the 16th instant, where three Protestant clergymen persisted, as alleged, in holding open-air meetings for preaching to Catholics in a district where the Catholics outnumbered the Protestants by three to one; is he aware that a few years ago similar attempts were made to proselitise the Catholic inhabitants, which gave much offence to them and to their clergy; has he seen a statement published in the papers, to the effect that many of the most respectable Protestant inhabitants disapprove of the action taken by their clergy in this matter, and also that the Resident Magistrate and Police Authorities have advised them to desist from their action; and will he consider if any, and what, further steps can be taken in the interests of law and order to protect the Catholic people from what they regard as insulting to their religious convictions?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I have also to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether his attention has been called to a report of proceedings at Arklow on Sunday last, contained in the *Daily Express* of Monday; whether the statements contained in that report, namely, that the Episcopalian and Methodist ministers engaged in open-air preaching were stoned and assaulted by a hostile crowd, are true; and whether, so long as these services are conducted so as not to cause obstruction, he will protect these ministers in the exercise of a lawful right?

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Have Catholic priests applied for police protection to hold open-air services on the Shankhill Road and Sandy Row, Belfast; and so long as such services are conducted so as not to cause obstruction, will he protect these ministers of religion in the exercise of a lawful right?

MR. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) also put a question on the same subject.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In answer to the question of the hon. Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy), I have to say that I have not received a Report, and therefore cannot give a detailed answer. In answer to my hon. Friends behind me, I have to say that some very discreditable scenes of violence directed against three Protestant clergymen at Arklow, and against one or two members of their congregation, took place on the morning and evening of last Sunday. Every protection will be given to these persons so long as they keep within the law.

ARMAGH NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

MR. JORDAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, since the local manager, on 14th April last, refused admission to Armagh National School, County Clare, to Michael O'Brien's children "for want of room," five other children, two of them being a policeman's, have since been admitted; and whether, under such circumstances, he will now intimate, through the proper quarter, the propriety of settling this matter by admitting O'Brien's children to either Armagh or Mullagh School?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Commissioners of National Education report that they have no knowledge of the particular circumstance mentioned in the first paragraph, but they refer to the explanatory letter already received from the manager of the school in regard to the matter. He states that the accommodation in the Armagh and Mullagh Schools is quite insufficient even for the number of children usually attending them; that he has, therefore, been obliged to restrict the admission of new pupils, but that, in doing so, he takes care not to deprive anyone of the advantages of education, and that he never refuses anyone who is not within a convenient distance of another school. As already stated, O'Brien's children are within a convenient distance of Coore School, which, as a matter of fact, they had been regularly attending until an attempt was made to boycott the school, in furtherance of which O'Brien withdrew his children. The manager does not consider that, in these circumstances, he would be justified in still further inconveniencing the teachers and pupils of the two other schools mentioned by admitting O'Brien's children. The manager's action has the full approval of the Commissioners.

MEDICAL ATTENDANCE IN IRELAND.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the statement in the

Kerry Weekly Reporter of 7th instant, that, on 22nd May, 1890, at Tralee, a man named John Everett obtained a "red ticket" directing Dr. John R. Hayes, the local dispensary doctor, to visit his son, Charles Everett, who was suddenly taken ill that day; that the ticket was duly left at the doctor's residence, who, although Everett called three times, failed to attend the sick child; and that the child died, without any medical attendance, at 2 o'clock next morning; whether a Coroner's Order was made to hold an inquest, and summonses were at once issued by the police for that purpose; whether the inquest was held; and if, not, why not; whether it is true, as stated, that the Coroner, Major Spring, acting on his own authority, failed to hold the inquest, after directing the summonses to be issued; what return was made as to the cause of death, and whether any explanation has been offered by Doctor Hayes?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed by the police that the facts are as stated in the question. The failure of the doctor to attend on the sick child is certainly a matter requiring investigation, and I shall ask the Local Government Board to investigate it. The return of the cause of death was "convulsions," and I understand that the grounds upon which the Coroner decided not to hold the inquest, for which he had originally issued his precept, were that there was no suspicion of foul play.

Dr. TANNER: Am I to understand that the right hon. Gentleman proposes to institute an inquiry into the conduct of this medical officer, who happens to be a Nationalist, when he has refused a similar investigation into the conduct of a medical officer who happens to be a supporter of the Government?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. Member can show that there is any analogy between the two cases, of course, a similar course would be taken.

MITCHELSTOWN AND FERMOY RAILWAY.

Mr. SUMMERS (Huddersfield): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Mitchelstown and Fermoy Railway Company, which was in existence at the time of the passing of the Public Works Loans (Tramways) (Ireland) Act, having obtained an order in Council in June, 1885, complied in every particular with the provisions of the said Act, and was entitled to the benefit of the same; whether he is aware that it has in perpetuity a 5 per cent. baronial guarantee, and that, on the faith of the aforesaid, it entered into a contract, in June, 1888, for the construction of its line, one of the conditions of the contract being that it was to obtain a loan from the Board of Works; and whether, under the circumstances, the Treasury will instruct the Board of Works to make the advance applied for by the Mitchelstown and Fermoy Railway Company?

*Mr. JACKSON: The Mitchelstown and Fermoy Railway Company no doubt fulfilled the conditions required by the Public Works Loans (Tramways) (Ireland) Act, 1886, to be satisfied before a loan can be granted, but it was not entitled to the loan as a matter of right. I have no knowledge as to whether one of the conditions of the contract was to be a loan from the Board of Works; but I can hardly conceive that anyone would impose such a condition, or any contractor accept such a contract, without first ascertaining whether a loan could be obtained. As I have already stated, in answer to previous questions, the Treasury, in the exercise of its discretion, decided not to make any further loans under that Act.

THE IRISH POLICE AND EVICTIONS.

Mr. PETER M'DONALD (Sligo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, at the eviction of a tailor, named John Battle, from a cabin in Ardnaree, a suburb of Ballina, by Sir Charles Knox Gore, there were drafted into the town from outlying stations detachments of police to aid those stationed in the two police barracks in the town; whether the police so drafted in are to be paid an allowance of 3s. 6d. per day, in addition to their ordinary pay, which shall be charged on the ratepayers of the district; whether, in consequence of the roof of the cabin having partially fallen in, the tenant had already left the place, or was preparing to do so; and whether, under the circumstances, this large police force was required?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Police were employed for the protection of the officers who were executing the law, and they were paid 1s. or 1s. 6d. each in addition to their ordinary pay. None of it will be chargeable on the ratepayers of the district. The roof of John Battle's house had not fallen in, and the tenant had not left the place.

THE DISTURBANCES AT CASHEL AND TIPPERARY.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he proposes to take any action with reference to the following accusations made in the unanimous Report of the Town Commissioners of Cashel, and declared by the Commissioners, after investigation, to be established:—

> "That, at about 4.30 p.m on Tuesday the 27th ultimo, the police at Cashel charged into private houses, and furiously attacked persons who had not been out of doors:
>
> That they next broke into the premises of a Mr. Cahill, and made a violent attack upon two young men named Connors and Maher:
>
> That they next attacked the house of Mr. Michael Noonan, a respectable victualler, breaking open his door, which was locked, and that on this occasion a constable stationed at Cashel maltreated Mr. Noonan's son:
>
> That a little boy of 10, named O'Meara, was knocked down by a constable, who kicked him in the face while he was down:
>
> That two town sergeants in uniform were hustled and assaulted by policemen, and that one of them, Town Sergeant Patrick Corcoran, was violently attacked in front of the house of Dr. Coyle, and under his observation:
>
> That two flags, displayed on a private house on the premises of the Corporation, were forcibly removed by the police:
>
> That a constable, named O'Connor, threatened to shoot a lad, named Heney, in his own house at the lower gate:
>
> That Constable Thomas Ryan attacked an Army pensioner, named Bryan, who was standing alone and quietly in the street, and struck him so violently on the head that he broke the baton, whereupon another constable asked him did he 'wish for more;'"

and that a boy, named Horley, aged 14, who carried a bannerette in a procession of schoolboys, had the bannerette taken from him, and was knocked down, arrested, and taken to the lock-up, and when his brother said, "Don't tear his coat," he also was arrested, and when his mother went to the station to inquire for him she was taken into custody?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: When will the right hon. Gentleman be able to give the information which he promised the other day?

DR. TANNER: Can the right hon. Gentleman give the name of any reliable medical man who visited any of the persons who are alleged to have been ill-treated?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know that I can add anything to the answer I gave to a question practically identical in its terms put to me by the hon. Member for Cork a day or two ago. I suppose that some of the alleged incidents will form the subject of judicial inquiry.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Have there been any cases of persons received into the hopitals or infirmaries of Cashel or Tipperary on account of injuries sustained on the occasion referred to?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In answer to the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), I can only say that there is nothing which I have heard to induce me to depart from my original opinion I previously expressed, that no serious injuries at all were inflicted.

MR. SEXTON: As the charges include breaking into private houses and assaults on private persons, which have now been the subject of inquiry by the Local Commissioners, I wish to know what initiative the right hon. Gentleman will take to ascertain the facts of the case if the charges are proved to be true?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have made a thorough investigation, and nothing has come to my knowledge which would suggest that I should depart from the course which I have laid down. The inquiry of the Town Commissioners did not include an inquiry into the conduct of the police.

MR. SEXTON: There are some cases which were not the subject of judicial inquiry, and I wish to ask whether the Town Commissioners of Cashel have not stated that they would be prepared to submit affidavits to the Executive, and whether, if such affidavits are submitted, the right hon. Gentleman will, at least, order a Departmental Inquiry?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Any documents, whether affidavits or not, will receive full consideration. Until I see them, I cannot promise to found any action upon them.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: How is it that an inquiry is promised to the hon. Member for South Tyrone in reference to the conduct of a medical officer, while the public are refused an inquiry into the action of the police?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: There is no analogy between the two cases. The question brought forward by the hon. Member for South Tyrone was as to the alleged misconduct of an official of the Local Government Board.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Is the House to understand that the Government will inquire into the action of a doctor who had received a red ticket, and will not inquire into the action of policemen who has broken the heads of Her Majesty's subjects.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member seems to think that no inquiry has been made; of course I have made an inquiry.

Mr. SEXTON: The question which I ask and press is, whether an inquiry will be ordered if the Board to which I have referred submits documents?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot be expected to answer hypothetical questions of that character. Any documents submitted will receive attention, but I cannot promise that an inquiry will be held.

Mr. E. HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): Have not the Police Authorities conveyed to the right hon. Gentleman the fact that the red ticket which has been alluded to was not marked "urgent," and that it was not usual for a dispensary doctor to go out after dispensary hours in response to tickets not marked "urgent," and if these facts have been given by the police, why does the right hon. Gentleman insist on any inquiry?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: This question would have been more properly asked in relation to the previous question on the Paper; but, of course, if the statements which the hon. Gentleman makes are accurate, that will come out when the inquiry is instituted.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I wish to know whether the right hon. Gentleman intends to convey to the House that no persons were injured by the charge of the police at Cashel; from whom did the right hon. Gentleman derive his information on this matter, and does he know that some people who were injured declined to report their injuries for fear of prosecution? I also wish to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman will inquire from the various chemists and apothecaries in Cashel as to the number of people treated by them for injuries.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: My answer was given on the best investigation I could make. No cases of injury have been treated in the hospitals or infirmaries of the district.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: There is no hospital in Cashel, and I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman will inquire of the apothecary near the Post Office whether he did not treat people for injuries received from the police batons? I want to know the character of the men he treated, and whether they were all teetotallers.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not see the relevancy of the last observation of the hon. Member. The question of the hon. Member for South Tyrone was meant to elicit the fact that serious injuries, as far as could be discovered, had not been inflicted. I take it that injuries which are treated by an apothecary are not serious injuries.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: There is no infirmary at Cashel except the poor house.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: As it is important to know what the right hon. Gentleman deems to be serious injuries, may I ask whether eight or ten wounds inflicted on the head of a person by a constable while the person was held by other constables can be called a serious injury?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It would depend on the nature of the injuries.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: What infirmary is there at Cashel?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I coupled Cashel with Tipperary, as they are habitually coupled in Debate on this subject.

Mr. SHEEHY: What infirmary is there at Tipperary?

[No answer was given.]

ACTIONS AGAINST THE IRISH CONSTABULARY.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is the practice of the Government in any cases to pay the costs of the defence in actions brought against the Irish Constabulary for acts done in their capacity of constables; and, if so, in what class of cases; whether it is the practice of the Government, in cases in which damages are obtained against members of the Irish Constabulary for acts done in their capacity of constables, to defray such damages out of the public funds; and if payment is ever made out of public funds in respect of either costs or damages, under what head in the Estimates is the money voted? Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in one of these cases a verdict for £100 damages has been given against the police, and is it proposed in that case that the Government shall pay the damages and costs?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The rule as to the payment of the legal expenses of constables, against whom proceedings have been taken for acts done by them in the execution of their duty, is the same in the Royal Irish Constabulary, the London Metropolitan Police, and in the Dublin Metropolitan Police. The invariable practice is for the constable, in the first instance, to defend himself; and when the proceedings have terminated, the propriety of indemnifying him is considered and decided by Government. If it be found to be a case for indemnifying the constable, the costs of the defence are charged to the Law Charges Vote, sub-head "Defence of Officials," and the damages are charged against the Constabulary Vote, sub-head "Incidental Expenses."

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Are we to understand that the action of a constable in the discharge of his duty covers a case in which he has exceeded the limits of his duty; and are we to understand that two or three Law Officers of the Crown, as in the case tried in Dublin yesterday, are retained to defend the constabulary at the cost of the Crown and not of the accused person?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is a question which I must leave to my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General for Ireland to answer. What I referred to was an act done by a constable in the execution of his duty. The question whether he exceeded his duty must be decided by the Court.

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I ask the Attorney General whether, in such a case, the expenses of the Law Officers of the Crown in defending a constable would be charged upon the taxpayers if it is found that he acted illegally?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELALD (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): I know nothing of the case except from what I have seen in the Public Press. I think the question of the hon. and learned Member had better be put upon the Paper.

POLICE "SHADOWING" IN IRELAND.

MR. CLANCY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number of constables employed for the last six months, and now employed in Ireland, in the operation known as shadowing, and the cost to the State in pay, allowances, and car hire of those constables?

MR. DILLON: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the question, I wish to supplement it by another of which I I have given him private notice. Is it true, as stated in the *Irish Times* this morning, that the Executive Government in Ireland have ordered the police to put a stop to this system of shadowing?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; there is no truth in that statement. In regard to the question on the Paper, the Constabulary Authorities report that it is not the practice to employ constables specially on the duty in question. The number discharging this duty on any particular day would depend upon the particular circumstances of that day. There is no record of the additional cost involved by this duty; but it consists, for the most part, of car hire, which is believed to amount to no considerable sum, as police transport cars are, when possible, made available.

MR. SEXTON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the practice of shadowing at Dungarvan Fair has been given up in consequence of the issue of a circular by the Inspector General of Constabulary? Has such a circular been issued?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; there is not a word of truth in the report.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that, in the case of Mr. Thomas Barry and others who have been lately shadowed, they were followed all over Ireland by the same constables?

[No answer was given.]

Mr. PICTON (Leicester): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will lay upon the Table of the House, or place in the Library, a copy of the instructions under which Commissioners of Police in Ireland act in directing persons to be shadowed by constables in the mode recently adopted; whether he has seen copies of the instantaneous photographs, taken on Whit Monday, in three different parts of the town of Tipperary, by the hon. Member for North Monaghan, showing the Rev. Father Humphries shadowed by two constables, namely, John Ahern and Jeremiah Wallace, as he was going about his pastoral duties; whether he is aware of any precedent in English police procedure for such treatment of any of Her Majesty's subjects, unless when pursued on account of definite crimes for which they were about to be brought to trial; and whether he will re-consider his sanction of a practice which risks the infliction of grave inconvenience?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware that any written general instructions of the formal kind to which the hon. Gentleman alludes have been issued on the subject since the present Government came into Office; those issued previously are of a confidential character. I have not had the pleasure of seeing the photographs in question. In answer to paragraph (3) the shadowing is in connection with a definite class of offences against the law, and I have not the least doubt that if any English town were in the condition of Tipperary measures of at least equal severity would be adopted.

Mr. PICTON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will accept copies of these photographs?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes; I shall feel very much obliged if the hon. Gentleman will give me copies of them.

Mr. DILLON: Have any instructions in regard to this system of shadowing been issued since the right hon. Gentleman came into Office? It is different from anything of the kind that existed under the right hon. Gentleman's predecessors. The House is entitled to know whether this system of shadowing has been introduced on the authority of particular Magistrates or constables, or whether fresh instructions have been issued.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not admit the correctness of the assertion that there is a great variation between the present and the previous system. As far as I am aware, no instructions of a formal kind have been issued by the Government in Dublin, and of course I am in constant communication with the officials.

Mr. DILLON: I must press for a distinct answer. The right hon. Gentleman stated in the House the other day that this system of shadowing was done under his authority. I can state of my own knowledge that the system of shadowing now pursued is something absolutely different from anything which ever took place in the country before. Are we to understand that this system of shadowing was initiated without an order of the Executive, and on the responsibility of individual Magistrates or policemen?

Earl COMPTON (York, W.R., Barnsley): Are we to understand that during the years 1880-82 this practice existed? I was in Ireland at the time, and saw nothing of it.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The time to which the noble Lord refers was when Lord Cowper was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and I do not know that the system to which I allude was in operation before the Lord Lieutenancy of Lord Spencer. On the 19th of June, 1882, Mr. Healy asked the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division (Sir G. Trevelyan), then Chief Secretary, whether his attention had been called to a statement in a Belfast newspaper to the effect that Inspectors of police had watched a local contractor, and the right hon. Gentleman replied, "It is quite true that the police have been carefully watching persons, but I decline to say on what ground."

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I may explain to the House that this man was suspected of being the murderer of Lord Frederick Cavendish. It turned out that he was unjustly suspected; but he was persecuted by that abominable system for over 12 months.

Mr. DILLON: I state of my own knowledge that the system of shadowing now pursued was never in force before. The question and answer which the right hon. Gentleman has just read had no reference to a system of shadowing similar to that which is now adopted. It simply amounted to watching.

*MR. SPEAKER: It is impossible to raise an argument now as to what happened in 1882.

MR. DILLON: The right hon. Gentleman mentioned it.

*MR. SPEAKER: Only in answer to a question by the noble Lord the Member for the Barnsley Division (Earl Compton).

MR. DILLON: The noble Lord did not mention that year.

CAPTAIN VERNEY (Bucks, N.): I understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that if the same state of things existed in England that exists in Tipperary the same method of shadowing would be observed. Are we to understand that if in the town of Buckingham a state of things existed similar to that which exists in Tipperary the system of shadowing by the police would be enforced at Buckingham?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member must know either very little of Buckingham or very little of Tipperary.

MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): Questions of this kind must occupy a great deal of the time of the House unless the First Lord of the Treasury will consent to take the Irish Police Vote at some very early date. Will the right hon. Gentleman do that?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): If the right hon. Gentleman will repeat the question on another day, I will endeavour to answer it.

MR. J. MORLEY: I will repeat the question to-morrow.

CHARGE AGAINST POLICE SERGEANT LORD.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in the Report furnished to him in the case of charges of forgery and fraud made by John Maher, of Lorrha, against Sergeant Lord, of that station, the fact is stated that some time after Maher had made his complaint to the Inspector General of Constabulary, he was waited on by Mr. Doolan, J.P., with an offer of the money that Lord had previously refused to pay him; and whether, in view of this presumptive evidence that the amount claimed was due, and that Sergeant Lord was guilty of fraud on the Police Authorities by returning as a voucher a forged receipt for the money that had not been paid, the Government will direct the Attorney General to consider the case with a view to the vindication of justice?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Local Constabulary officer reports that he has not ascertained that the Magistrate mentioned intervened at any time as alleged, nor has the further inquiry instituted resulted in any discovery that the Sergeant had acted improperly in the case. The Inspector General is still pursuing the inquiry.

MR. THOMAS BARRY.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that civil proceedings have been taken by Mr. Thomas Barry, P.L.G., against District Inspector Ball, R.I.C., Fermoy, for alleged assault, he will cause instructions to be issued to the Constabulary Authorities in Ireland not to proceed with the charge against Mr. Barry under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act arising out of the proceedings for which the civil action has been brought by him, until the said action has been brought to a trial?

DR. TANNER: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether a warrant has been issued for the arrest of Mr. Barry, P.L.G., at the instance of a policeman named Drought, against whom Mr. Barry had previously instituted legal proceedings?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am unable at present to answer the question of the hon. Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner), and, in regard to the other question, it would be a dangerous precedent to lay it down that a prosecution could be deferred by the person prosecuted bringing an action. There seems no ground for fearing that the prosecution will prejudice the civil action.

MR. FLYNN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Mr. Barry's house was broken into the night before last and Mr. Barry made prisoner? As the case has been adjourned owing to some legal technicality, will he give instructions that the civil action shall take precedence of any other proceedings?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have received no intimation of the fact mentioned by the hon. Member, and I am unable, in the present state of my knowledge of the circumstances, to lay down a general principle.

Dr. TANNER: Is it not the fact that this member of the Royal Irish Constabulary has already been charged with participating in a savage assault in which a poor woman was killed, and will the right hon. Gentleman remove him from Fermoy where his action is occasioning much disturbance?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no information that would enable me to reply to the hon. Gentleman.

Mr. E. HARRINGTON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that it is the practice of the police when charged with an offence to serve summonses by way of retaliation. Was not that so in the case of Withams and Fleming?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is not a question arising out of the answer.

Mr. E. HARRINGTON: I thought I was giving point to the matter by referring to a particular instance. In this case, was it not within the knowledge of the police that Mr. Barry was about to bring a civil action, had he not already taken preliminary steps, and have not the subsequent proceedings of the police been taken by way of retaliation?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no information to lead me to suppose that that was the case. My impression is the other way.

THE CLANRICARDE TENANTRY.

Mr. SHEEHY (Galway, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Head Constable Judge and the police in Portumna have been going amongst the Clanricarde tenantry with a list of the tenants who they say paid their rents; who supplied this list to Head Constable Judge; and by whose orders this constable and the police under him are doing this duty of bailiff for Lord Clanricarde?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have received no information that will enable me to answer the question. Inquiry is being made.

Mr. SHEEHY: I will repeat the question to-morrow.

CHARGE AGAINST THE IRISH POLICE.

Mr. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the case of two constables of the Irish Constabulary who were convicted before County Court Judge Henn, at Gort, on the 13th inst., on a charge of the false arrest and imprisonment of two men, named John Morressy and Martin Fahy, at Portumna, and ordered to pay damages and costs, including the fees of counsel; whether it was by the instructions of the Crown that Mr. Blake, the Crown Prosecutor, defended the police; is it the intention of the Crown to pay the cost of the trial, and also the damages awarded against the police; and whether any action will be taken by the Police Authorities against the constables for their conduct in this matter?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The reply to the inquiry in the first paragraph is in the affirmative; to that in the second paragraph in the negative. Pending the result of an appeal, I am not in a position to make a further statement.

Dr. TANNER: Am I to understand that the legal expenses will only be paid in the event of the men being convicted?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir. The hon. Gentleman must not understand anything of the kind.

THE POLICE AT NEW TIPPERARY.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is a fact that, on the 11th instant, during the night, the police burnt down a green flag which was on a flag-staff at New Tipperary; whether it was replaced, on the night of the 15th, by a flag, which was seized and carried off on the 16th; what authority have the police for taking what does not belong to them; is it legal for the police to do so; and will he inquire into the circumstances of the seizures with the view of preventing their recurrence?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that it is the case that the police removed the pole and flag on each of the days mentioned, but it is not the case the poles were erected at New Tipperary. They were in Henry Street, Old Tipperary. The police removed the pole and flag because it was an obstruction. When it was replaced on the night of the 14th, they warned the people living in the vicinity that it should be removed. The police took it with them because nobody claimed it, and it could not be left lying on the street. The police acted legally in the discharge of their duty.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): Can the hon. Gentleman say whether some delay has been caused because the Chief Registrar devoted part of his Report to criticisms of the proceedings of the Select Committee last year?

SIR H. MAXWELL: No, Sir. I think those criticisms were necessary.

PRISON WARDERS' UNIFORMS.

MR. O'KEEFFE (Limerick, City): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he has received complaints from warders of Irish gaols that they have been subjected to annoyance from the fact of being compelled to wear official prison uniform in public?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In one instance only does such a complaint appear to have been received by the Irish Government.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, E.): As the system has been instituted only by the *régime* of the right hon. Gentleman, will he, as head of the Prisons Board, give directions for the discontinuance of it, and allow the warders to wear ordinary clothes when away on their holidays?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have nothing to add to my answer.

DR. KENNY (Cork, S.): Might I ask the Home Secretary what is the custom in England. Are the prison officials compelled to wear their uniforms when not on duty?

MR. MATTHEWS: I answered that question the other day. I said that the warders of convict prisoners were under such a rule.

GUNS FOR THE MAURITIUS.

MR. OCTAVIUS V. MORGAN (Battersea): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is the case that the fortifications in Mauritius recently completed are still without the promised big guns, without which the fortifications are ineffective; and, if so, when the necessary guns will be ready to be mounted?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I am sorry that it has not yet been possible to issue these guns. The guns now coming in are being issued according to the relative importance of the places to be defended.

EVICTIONS ON THE OLPHERT ESTATE.

MR. DALTON (Donegal, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the total number of families to be evicted during the coming week on the Olphert estate; whether he has seen the statement that Mr. Olphert boasted that by November next the Falcarragh district shall be laid waste, and that not a tenant shall hold a foot of his soil; whether fresh proceedings have been taken which, if persisted in, will have the effect of bringing the number of families rendered homeless in the Falcarragh district up to the appalling total of 600; and whether, in view of the desolation which must result from this, and in view of the fact that the Government have dropped the Land Bill, which contained a provision for the relief of congested districts, he can see his way to adopting a similar course to that taken by the President of the Board of Trade when Chief Secretary, in the case of the Clanricarde tenantry, or will he take any steps whatever to relieve the destitution of the district?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand there are 43 evictions pending on the Olphert estate for next week, in consequence of the continued operation of the Plan of Campaign. I have not seen the statement attributed to Mr. Olphert, that he boasted that by November next the Falcarragh district should be laid waste, nor do I believe it to be true that he made it. As a matter of fact, he has already settled with a number of his tenants. I understand that proceedings are pending which will bring up the total number of families whose position is imperilled by the Plan of Campaign to 458. It is not a fact that the Purchase of Land Bill has been dropped.

THE WORKMEN OF THE HOUSE.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether it is intended at the end of the present contract to cause the staff employed in general cleaning, painting roofs, &c., of the Houses of Parliament, to be paid through the Clerk of the Works, without any deduction of their pay for the benefit of a middleman?

MR. C. GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): Before that question is answered I will ask the right hon. Gentleman if he is aware that the London County Council has done everything in its power to eliminate the presence of middlemen in the sense indicated in this question from all its contracts?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, Dublin University): I am not responsible for the action of the London County Council.

MR. C. GRAHAM: I am afraid I made myself but imperfectly understood. I wished to know if the right hon. Gentleman was aware of the fact I have stated.

MR. PLUNKET: I do not think I am required to express any opinion on that subject.

MR. C. GRAHAM: Still I have not made myself plain——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! What the London County Council may have done has nothing whatever to do with this question.

MR. PLUNKET: The system under which contracts for labour and materials are entered into by the Office of Works has been referred to a Departmental Committee, with a view to the matter being fully considered before any fresh contract is entered into. This Committee will inquire into the question as to the mode of paying the staff employed about the Houses of Parliament to be adopted in the future.

PLYMOUTH BARRACKS.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what are the rules in regard to the admission of tradesmen to the forts and barracks at Plymouth; and whether any respectable tradesman of the town will be allowed a pass on application?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The general principle of recent rules is to limit as far as possible the admission of persons to military works and buildings, except upon business. Provision is made for a pass for tradesmen and others who may be admitted to the residential portion of any fort or barrack, at the discretion of the General Officer commanding the district.

LAND COMMISSION—QUEEN'S COUNTY.

MR. LALOR (Queen's Co., Leix): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of casses of appeals from the fair rents fixed by the Sub-Commission for Queen's County that were disposed of by the Chief Commission at its recent sitting; and in how many cases were the rents fixed by the Sub-Commission reduced, confirmed, and increased respectively?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I shall be obliged if the hon. Member will defer this question till Monday, as the Chief Commission is now on circuit.

THE DRAINAGE AND IMPROVEMENT OF LAND BILL.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of his previous declarations on the subject, he will use his influence with political friends to prevent the progress of the Drainage and Improvement of Land (Ireland) Bill being prevented by them?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is a fact that, so far as I am concerned, so far as the Irish Government are concerned, we view with approval the Bill brought in by the hon. Member. I have no power to do what he suggests, but I do what I can by making this specific declaration in favour of the Bill.

LOCAL REGISTRY OF TITLES (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. O'KEEFFE: I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland if it is his intention to proceed with the Local Registry of Titles (Ireland) Bill this Session?

MR. MADDEN: The Bill will, I hope, be in the hands of hon. Members in a few days.

THE REV. MR. MACRAE.

MR. LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether any charge of boycotting or intimidation has been made against the Rev. David Macrae, a minister of religion at Dundee, who is at present travelling in Ireland for the benefit of his health; and on what grounds he was recently "shadowed" by the police while travelling from Newbridge to Clongorey?

MR. CAREW (Kildare): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, on the same subject, whether the Rev. Mr. Macrae, of Dundee, and his wife, when visiting Clongorey on Thursday last, were shadowed by a policeman named Keating, who followed them from point to point on a bicycle, going everywhere the visitors went to; and whether he can say why they were so shadowed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There is no charge of boycotting or intimidation against the rev. gentleman, and not the slightest foundation that he was shadowed. The policeman referred to was engaged on a wholly different matter.

WHISKY BONDING.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is intended to limit the Committee on Bonding and Blending Whisky to considering the propriety of applying the Food and Drugs Act and the Merchandise Marks Act solely to foreign spirits, and to mixtures of foreign with British spirits; and if so, has he considered the possible result therefrom, namely, a recommendation to penalise or prohibit certain makes of foreign spirits and blends as nefarious or unwholesome, while there could be no inquiry into the case of home spirits manufactured in the same way or of the same ingredients, which are passed off on the public as Irish or Scotch whisky?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): It is not intended to place any such limit, and the terms of reference, which will be placed on the Paper, will include the points referred to by the hon. Member.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I am obliged to the right hon. Gentleman.

RETIRING WARRANTS—"REGINA *V.* MITCHELL."

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if his attention has been drawn to complaints that a restrictive Treasury limit of compensation of 1882 was withheld from the knowledge of Officers of the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers when they were invited to retire under the Royal Warrants of 1881 and 1884; whether the principle of "acturial calculations" has been applied to all cases of regimental and full Colonels of the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers, and also to the cases of Lieutenant-Colonels, Royal Engineers, subsequent to that of Colonel E. M. Lloyd, who retired under the provisions of those warrants; whether a Treasury limit or Departmental ruling of September, 1882, has been applied to the cases of those Lieutenant-Colonels, Royal Engineers, who retired under the above-named warrants, from Lieutenant-Colonel E. R. James to the case of Lieutenant-Colonel F. B. Mainguy, thereby reducing their life annuities for loss sustained under warrants of a later date than 1872 to £150 a year, instead of granting them the compensation they were entitled to on "actuarial calculations," as stipulated by both the warrants; whether he will lay such Minute or ruling upon the Table of the House; and whether it is true that this Minute or ruling has been filed in the Royal Courts of Justice in the demurrer and plea in the recent case of "Mitchell *v.* Regina"?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: My answer to the first three of the hon. Member's questions is "Yes," with the exception that there is no stipulation in the Warrant as to actuarial calculations. To the fourth question I must answer "No;" and as to the fifth, I have no information at my disposal.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg, also, to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is true that in 1886-7 he returned as surplus to the Treasury, under Vote 19, £25,720, voted by Parliament for the compensation of retired Officers; whether, in each successive year up to the present date, large sums voted by Parliament for the same purpose have been returned into the Exchequer; and whether, under these circumstances, he is prepared to recommend to the Chancellor of the Exchequer the unsatisfied claim of the suppliant in "Mitchell *v.* Regina," and any of his brother Officers who may have been underpaid, for favourable consideration?

*Mr. E. STANHOPE: I must refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the First Lord of the Treasury on the 12th of this month.

THE VERY REV. DR. M'ALROY.

Mr. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can explain the grounds which induced the Prisons Board neither to dismiss nor to censure the very Rev. Dr. M'Alroy, P.P., chaplain of Tullamore Goal, who, when summoned to give evidence relative to the conveyance of a suit of clothes to the hon. Member for North East Cork, Mr. William O'Brien, while a prisoner in Tullamore Gaol in 1887, first before Mr. Joyce, who conducted an inquiry on oath on behalf of the Prisons Board, and subsequently before Mr. Burke, Chairman of the Prisons Board, refused absolutely to appear before either gentleman or give any evidence, sworn or otherwise, in relation to the inquiry, whereas the Rev. Father O'Dougherty, late chaplain of Derry Gaol, was dismissed by the Prisons Board for refusing to answer certain questions which he considered ought not to have been put to a minister of religion, when giving evidence in an inquiry conducted by Mr. Joyce, on behalf of the Prisons Board, relative to the conveyance of letters out of the prison, with which it was not proved Father O'Dougherty had anything to do?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The General Prisons Board report that it appears, from the Minutes of Evidence in the Office, that the Rev. Dr. McAlroy not only did not refuse to give evidence before Mr. Bourke, Chairman of the Prisons Board, but was examined upon oath by him with regard to the conveyance of a suit of clothes to Mr. O'Brien, M.P. From the Report received from Mr. Inspector Joyce on the same subject, it does not appear that the Rev. Dr. McAlroy was called upon by him to give evidence upon the subject, but an inquiry has been to-day addressed to Mr. Joyce on the matter.

THE ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SHOW AT PLYMOUTH.

Mr. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in accordance with the usual practice, he has sanctioned the employment of an Inspector, two sergeants, and a number of constables belonging to the A Division of the Metropolitan Police, at the forthcoming Royal Agricultural Show at Plymouth; that the sergeants will be represented by two sub-inspectors, and the constables by sub-inspectors and sergeants, to the exclusion of the constables in the A Reserve, who are available for duty of this kind; and that, in consequence of a similar arrangement last year, the number of sergeants left at home was insufficient for the proper performance of the sectional duties; and, whether he will take steps to prevent such an irregularity in the future?

Mr. MATTHEWS: I have sanctioned, in accordance with a practice which has existed for many years, the employment of a certain number of officers of the Metropolitan Police at the forthcoming Agricultural Show at Plymouth. The selection of these officers is entirely in the discretion of the Commissioner. I have no information of any inconvenience or irregularity having arisen in the past, or being likely to arise in the present year.

HELIGOLAND.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he is aware that on the 6th September, 1887, the hon. Member for Mid Cork moved the reduction of the Foreign and Colonial Vote by £1,000, in order to urge on the Government the propriety of the cession of the island of Heligoland to Germany, and that the Secretary of State for the Colonies then stated that "it is not the intention nor the desire of Her Majesty's Government to part with Heligoland to Germany;" and what has occurred since that date to cause the Government to alter its intention?

***Sir J. FERGUSSON**: What has occurred since that date has been the settlement of the outlines of an arrangement in which the cession of Heligoland forms part.

CHATHAM CONVICT PRISON OFFICIALS AND IRISH CONVICTS.

Dr. KENNY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the fact that there exists in the public mind a suspicion that so much soreness must necessarily remain in the minds of certain officials of Chatham Convict Prison, against whom charges of cruelty, &c., were made by Messrs. Daly, Egan, and other prisoners in that establishment, towards said prisoners for having made said charges, as to make it very difficult for the officials in question to discharge impartially and without friction their duties in relation to such prisoners, he will, in the interests of the officials involved, direct the removal of the prisoners in question to some other convict establishment where no ground can exist for such suspicions?

Mr. MATTHEWS: I have seen no evidence that there exists in the public mind any suspicion of the kind referred to. I am assured, as a matter of fact, by the Directors of Convict Prisons, that there is no difficulty in the way of the impartial discharge of their duties by the officials of Chatham Prison, and that no sort of soreness exists in their minds in consequence of the complaints that have been made against them. No cause, therefore, exists for the removal of the prisoners in question on these grounds. I may point out that the complaints and the events to which they refer occurred some 18 months or two years ago, yet the prisoners admitted to the visitors that their treatment had improved during the last 18 months. This shows that the officers do not cherish any resentment, as the question seems to suggest.

Dr. KENNY: I wish also to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the fact that the recent official inquiry into the charges and allegations of cruelty and petty annoyances, &c., made by Messrs. Daly, Egan, and other prisoners undergoing penal servitude in Chatham Prison, against officials in that prison, has failed to satisfy public opinion in Ireland and elsewhere as to the truth or otherwise of said charges and allegations, and as to the impartiality of the said inquiry, he will consent to grant a sworn inquiry, by independent and non-official persons, as to the truth of the charges put forward?

Mr. MATTHEWS: I have no reason to believe that public opinion has not been satisfied by the thoroughly exhaustive and impartial inquiry of the Prison Visitors at Chatham Prison, which, to my mind, is quite conclusive on the subject of the charges and allegations of cruelty and petty annoyance made by Messrs. Daly, Egan, and other prisoners. I have no power to grant a sworn inquiry, but the essential feature of the inquiry just concluded is that it was conducted by independent and non-official persons. The Visitors were instituted for the very purpose of having a non-official Court of Review as to the conduct of prison officials.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: Has the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary done anything with a view to removing Scotch convicts from Chatham?

Mr. MATTHEWS: I am in communication with the Scotch Office.

Dr. KENNY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a great number of public bodies in Ireland have passed resolutions expressing the opposite opinion conveyed by the right hon. Gentleman as to the inquiry having been thorough and impartial?

Mr. MATTHEWS: I do not agree with that view.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: We shall raise this question on the Estimates.

CORONERS' JURIES AND THE IRISH POLICE.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government will assent to a Return giving, for the three years ended 31st May, 1890, particulars of any verdicts returned by Coroners' Juries, and of any prosecutions instituted against members of the Royal Irish Constabulary, with the results of the latter, and specifying whether any action has been taken by the Government in relation to the persons implicated; and, if so, what has been its nature?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No; but if the hon. Member will ask for a Return for 10 years, I will consider the matter.

THE POLICE AND THE CASHEL COMMISSONERS.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland by what authority, and for what reason, groups of policemen hung about the entrance to the Town Hall of Cashel at the time appointed for the last meeting of the Municipal Commissioners, and took down the name of each Commissioner as he entered?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I must ask the hon. Member to defer this question. I am making inquiries.

MR. SEXTON: I will put it to-morrow.

CUSTOMS CLERKS IN LONDON AND LIVERPOOL.

MR. ROYDEN (Liverpool, W., Toxteth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if it is intended that the provisions of the Treasury Order, dated 10th August, 1889, which gave effect to the recommendations of the Ridley Commission, and which are now under the consideration of the Treasury, on their application to the clerks of the Customs in London, will also be applied to the clerical staff of the Customs at Liverpool; and, if so, whether the Treasury will apply the same treatment to clerks of the present staff at both places whose positions are analogous?

SIR H. MAXWELL: I am not sure that I understand the precise meaning of the question put by my hon. Friend, but he will see that it is not possible for me to give any general pledge, such as his question suggests, upon cases not before me, without reference to the different conditions of each particular case.

THE MORFA COLLIERY DISASTER.

MR. S. T. EVANS (Glamorgan, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the learned counsel who attended the inquiry into the Morfa Colliery Disaster, South Wales, on behalf of the Government, or any of the Inspectors of Mines, have made Reports upon the inquiry; and, if so, whether such Reports will be placed upon the Table of the House?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir; Reports have been made by the learned counsel, and by one of the Inspectors. These are now with the printers, and they will be presented to Parliament in due course.

STRANORLAR UNION.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether the Irish Executive have yet arrived at any decision as to the relief to be given to the funds of the Stranorlar Union, in respect of the charges thrown on them by and through the improper removal from Scotland to that Union of the wife and children of James M'Cormick while the latter was in Great Britain.

MR. MADDEN: I have made inquiry on the subject of the question of the hon. and learned Gentleman since a former question put to me by him, and I have looked at the various Acts of Parliament bearing on this subject, and I am unable to find any means by which relief could be given to the funds of the Stranorlar Union in respect of the charges cast on them by the removal from Scotland of the persons referred to in this and the former questions of the hon. Member.

MR. E. HARRINGTON: Did not a similar case occur last week, when a man who had been 65 years in this country was sent back to an Irish Union?

MR. MADDEN: I have no information with regard to that matter of fact. It is too complicated a question for the Government to promise to introduce legislation this Session.

MR. A. O'CONNOR: Seeing that this is becoming a general practice with regard to Ireland, will the Government afford facilities for passing a Bill if it is brought in by a private Member?

MR. MADDEN: I must ask for notice of that question.

SHADOWING.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the number of persons "shadowed" in Ireland, and the number "watched" by the police, and the number of policemen engaged in these operations?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot give a definite answer to this question. The number of persons whom it is considered necessary to keep under supervision and the number of police engaged on such duty vary from day to day.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Can the right hon. Gentleman give a Return of the names and addresses of persons who have been shadowed since he came into office, and the causes of the shadowing? I do not think there will be any objection on the part of these people to have their names given.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I fear it would be impracticable to obtain such a Return.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Did the right hon. Gentleman say it was impracticable or objectionable?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I must have notice of the question. I should think it would be impracticable.

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the Order contained in page 212 of the Police Code, issued in 1881, by the then head of the Criminal Investigation Department, Scotland Yard, in which it is laid down that, "in keeping observation on suspected persons, great care must be taken that attention is not attracted;" if the police in Tipperary have recently adopted a contrary system, persistently following and obtruding their presence on certain subjects of Her Majesty in such a manner as to amount at Common Law to an "unlawful setting upon one's person;" and if the police in this matter act under any statutory authority; and, if not, whether a case will be submitted to the Law Officers of the Crown, in order to ascertain the legality or otherwise of this practice?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not seen the Order in question. No doubt, in many cases of suspected persons the watching would be more effectual if it could be done without attracting attention. I am advised that the police have not acted illegally, and no new practice has been established.

Dr. KENNY: Is not shadowing of the nature which has been described calculated to lead to a breach of the peace?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think that it is.

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF TELEGRAPHISTS.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether the official shorthand writer, sent by the Postal Authorities to a National Conference of Telegraphists recently held, has reported that resolutions strongly protesting against the writer's presence at the meeting were passed; and whether, in view of the great dissatisfaction thereby caused, he will in future abstain from sending such Government reporters to such meetings?

*Mr. RAIKES: Having seen the shorthand notes of the Conference to which the hon. Member refers, I have no intention of modifying the conditions on which meetings for the discussion of official questions are allowed to be held. Additional evidence of the value of such a Report is furnished by the request which reached me yesterday from the officer who acted, I believe, as Chairman of the Conference, to be supplied with a copy of the official report for the use of his committee, a request which I have had great pleasure in granting.

POLICE GRIEVANCES.

Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether policemen are entitled to form a combination for their mutual benefit and redress of grievances connected with their work and wages; and whether they are at liberty to hold meetings without complying with regulations similar to those imposed upon the Post Office employés?

Mr. MATTHEWS: If the police have any grievances or causes of complaint the Police Rules direct that such grievances can at any time be laid before the Commissioner through the superintendents of the divisions. I apprehend that combinations of the kind referred to would be irregular. Meetings, according to the rules, can only be held by the permission of the Commissioner. These Police Rules are quite independent of any regulations which may be made by any other Department of the State.

Mr. C. GRAHAM: Am I to understand policemen are not at liberty to form a trades union, or to attend a public meeting to discuss their grievances?

MR. MATTHEWS: I cannot add anything to the answer I have already given.

MR. C. GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether the statement appearing in some of the newspapers is correct, that in future men entering the Postal Service will be required to give a written undertaking not to join the Postmen's Union or attend any Union meetings; and, if so, by whose authority has it been issued?

*MR. RAIKES: No, Sir; the statement is not correct.

POSTAL BLOCKS.

MR. C. GRAHAM: In the absence of the hon. Member for Cornwall, Camborne, I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he has seen the statements in the *Evening News and Post* of the 18th, to the effect that, in St. Martin's-le-Grand, work, according to all accounts, is being impeded at an increasing ratio, to the grave inconvenience of business men; and whether he still adheres to his declaration that there is absolutely no foundation for such statements?

*MR. RAIKES: I have not only not seen the statements to which the hon. Member refers, but am assured by those who, on my behalf, have examined the paper mentioned that they are not to be found there. For the credit of the paper in question I am glad that this should be so, for had such statements been made, I should have felt constrained to qualify them as absolutely untrue.

IRELAND–CHARGES AGAINST THE POLICE.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is true that Mr. James O'Brien, of Killeagh, was arrested at Youghal Fair, last Monday, by a common policeman in plain clothes, who was occupied in closely and offensively "shadowing" Mr. O'Brien; and if he can explain why Mr. Redmond, R.M., was specially telegraphed for to investigate the charge of this gentleman accused of obstructing his "shadow"? I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether a warrant has been issued for the arrest of Mr. Barry, P.L.G., at the instance of a policeman named Drought, against whom Mr. Barry had previously instituted legal proceedings. I have further to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the manner in which the police escort behaved to two political prisoners, Messrs. Thomas and William Kent, who were brought from the County Court gaol to a Court held in Fermoy, on Monday, the 16th of June, under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; and why, and for what reason, were the prisoners handcuffed?

MR. MADDEN: I must ask the hon. Member to postpone these questions.

"SHARP *v.* WAKEFIELD."

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will lay upon the Table, as Parliamentary Papers, the following documents in connection with the licensing case of "Sharp *v.* Wakefield"; the statement of the case, and the judgments delivered in the Court of Appeal.

*MR. RITCHIE: I have made inquiries and cannot ascertain that there are any precedents for the presentation to Parliament of documents relating to particular cases which have been the subject of consideration in the Law Courts. The ordinary Law Reports supply ample information as to the decisions of the Judges, and the facts upon which those decisions were based, and I see no reason to supplement those Reports in the manner proposed.

MR. PICKERSGILL: Is there not an exact precedent in 1875 when the Protection of Property Bill was before the House, and when the charge to the Grand Jury at the Central Criminal Court by the late Recorder of London, in the well-known Trades Union case of Hibbert, was laid on the Table?

*MR. RITCHIE: I will inquire into it, but I must say it appears an entirely different thing to give a charge to a Grand Jury and the papers now asked for.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): Only a Session or two ago the Under Secretary laid on the Table the Charge of Chief Baron Palles in the case of Mr. Blunt.

*MR. RITCHIE: I have promised to inquire, I can do no more at present.

AYLESBURY PRISON.

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is correctly reported that he proposes to convert the local prison at Aylesbury into a convict prison; if so, why is an additional convict prison required; has there been an increase in the total number of convicts in England; what will be the cost (if any) of converting the prison to its new purpose; and will the prison be appropriated to any particular class of convicts?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir; it is the fact, that Aylesbury Prison has been closed as a local prison, in order that it may be converted into a convict prison in lieu of Woking Prison, which has been handed over to the War Department. It will not, therefore, be an additional convict prison. There has been no increase, but a decrease in the total number of convicts in England, and it is thus possible to give up the larger prison at Woking. The estimated cost of the necessary alterations is £16,500. It will be for female convicts.

MR. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): Is Woking to be used as a military prison?

MR. MATTHEWS: No; as barracks.

TELEGRAPHISTS' GRIEVANCES.

MR. M'CARTAN: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware that for several years clerks in the Central Telegraph Office, at small salaries, have performed overtime of four hours and upwards without the "quarter rate"; whether he will make inquiry into these cases, with the view of paying these clerks the "rate" to which they are entitled; whether clerks are employed on wires rented by newspaper proprietors from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m., although the night duty in the Central Office was, owing to its severity, reduced from eight to seven hours; whether, considering the heavy work on their wires, he will consider the desirability of dividing these duties; and whether, having regard to the fact that telegraph clerks frequently perform from eight to 13 hours duty on Sundays, he will allow them a relief to obtain, at least, one meal?

*MR. RAIKES: I am not aware that any telegraphists in the Central Telegraph Office who perform overtime for the Department in excess of three hours have not received the extra quarter rate. If any such cases are brought under the notice of the Controller the proper payment will be allowed. The question of dividing the duties at the newspaper special wires has on several occasions been considered, but it has not been deemed desirable to do so, as such an arrangement would be inconvenient both to the officers themselves and to the Department, and would not, I think, be acceptable to the newspapers. The telegraphists, I may mention, are able to secure intervals for rest and refreshment. I am assured, with reference to the last question asked by the hon. Member, that the telegraphists on duty on Sundays have ample opportunity for eating their meals undisturbed.

THE ANGLO-GERMAN AGREEMENT.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in the Agreement proposed for the purpose of defining the spheres of influence and territories of Great Britain and Germany in Africa, it is intended to confirm to the German Empire the whole of Damaraland; and whether there is any harbour, excepting the British port of Walfish Bay, by which access from the sea to Damaraland can be obtained?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: In the Agreement there is no alteration in the Protectorate of Damaraland by Germany, which has been for some time recognised by Her Majesty's Government. The Agreement is chiefly designed to define the respective spheres of influence in regions which have not hitherto been distinguished.

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): Will there be free transit for English goods through Damaraland?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I think that the hon. Member will see that the Agreement provides for absolute freedom of transit respectively from German and British territory in Central Africa; in Damaraland there will be the rights of settling and trading.

Mr. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith, &c.): When will the Papers he circulated with reference to the Agreement?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: I am afraid that I cannot say when the rest of the Papers will be presented, because the negotiations are not concluded; but I am sure that they will be presented at the earliest possible date.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether at an early date he will lay before the House Papers beyond the Despatch of Lord Salisbury, especially the Agreement which has recently appeared in the Official Gazette of Berlin, which differs in a certain degree from the details of Lord Salisbury's Despatch.

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: I must ask for notice of the question.

*Mr. O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): Will the principle of the "Hinterland" be applied to the Portuguese possessions?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: I think I must k for notice of the question.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will cause to be placed in the Library or Tea Room, for the information of Members, a map of Africa, showing the territories in dispute between Great Britain and Germany prior to the arrangement just arrived at and the exact nature of that arrangement?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: Yes, Sir; as soon as possible.

Mr. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what territory besides the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba is included in the proposed British Protectorate of Zanzibar?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: The whole of the dominions of the Sultan of Zanzibar, with the exception of the strip of coast farmed out to the German East Africa Company, are included in the proposed British Protectorate of Zanzibar.

Dr. CAMERON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government intend to bring in a Bill to sanction the proposed cession of Heligoland to Germany; and, if so, when the measure will be introduced?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: Yes; as soon as the agreement has been concluded of which the outlines have been embodied in the despatch of the 16th inst.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I desire also to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, before introducing a Bill for this purpose, Her Majesty's Government have taken, or will take, steps to ascertain the wishes of the inhabitants of Heligoland; whether Lord Knutsford stated in the House of Commons, in 1885, that official information had satisfied him that the inhabitants were averse to being annexed to Germany; and, further, that evidence before the Commission on Colonial Defences showed Heligoland to be of strategical importance to this country; and whether, since 1885, Her Majesty's Government have received information and evidence to a contrary effect; and, if so, what information and evidence?

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I should like to ask whether it is true, as has been reported, that the Civil Lord of the Admiralty has resigned?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: Were there any such crisis in the Government as the hon. Gentleman suggests, the House would have been apprised of the fact without a moment's delay. There is no such crisis. With regard to the question of the hon. Member for East Northamptonshire, and his anxiety to reconcile these apparent differences of opinion, I have to say that when Lord Knutsford spoke in March, 1885, there was no question of exempting the Heligolanders from compulsory military conscription, and this liability to conscription was, as Lord Knutsford pointed out, very distasteful to the inhabitants, and made them averse to a change. The Mover of the Address had stated that Heligoland was of no possible use to us, and Lord Knutsford only stated that some persons of experience entertained contrary views to that of the hon. Member. It may be observed that no proposal has been made by any Military Authority, or by the Royal Commission, in favour of fortifying Heligoland in any way.

Mr. CHANNING: Have any steps been taken to ascertain the wishes of the inhabitants of Heligoland?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I believe the Government are fully informed on the subject, and I have stated correctly the facts of the case.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the question, which was whether the Government have taken any steps to ascertain the feelings of the people of Heligoland?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I desire to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman will lay before the House the facts which have come to the knowledge of the Government since 1885, and which have given them their present view as to the wishes of the inhabitants of Heligoland.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Does the right hon. Gentleman wish to convey to the House that the Heligolanders were glad to get rid of British rule and preferred that of Germany?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: No, Sir. I do not wish to convey any such impression to the House. The Government have reason to believe from information that the people of Heligoland are not dissatisfied with the change.

MR. BUCHANAN: Supposing Parliament refuses to sanction the cession of Heligoland, will the rest of the Agreement which relates to Africa fall through?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I should think that if one very grave part of the Agreement is not ratified by the English Parliament, the rest of the Agreement could not be adhered to. I am, of course, speaking now without information, and I am sure the House will see that I can hardly be asked to give a decided answer to questions of this kind without notice.

MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.): Has the Agreement with Germany been concluded or not?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The hon. and learned Gentleman must be content to take the Papers which have been presented as showing the existing state of things. I cannot go beyond that.

MR. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby): I wish to ask the Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs whether the Government have, in the course of their negotiations, considered whether the rights of English fishermen in the North Sea around the coast of Heligoland, especially in regard to the recent interpretation of the word "fishing" by the High Court at Leipsic in reference to German territorial waters?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I will bring this important question under the notice of the Secretary of State.

MR. O'KELLY: Will the right hon. Gentleman undertake to lay on the Table the opinion of the Naval Authorities?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: No, Sir.

DR. CAMERON: The right hon. Gentleman stated that the Bill for the cession of Heligoland would be introduced when the Agreement was definitely concluded. Are we, then, to wait for the close of the negotiations as to the Niger Company?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I referred to the arrangement as detailed in the Papers now before the House.

MR. BRYCE: Will the Papers relating to the Agreement be presented to the House before the Bill is introduced?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I must ask for notice of that question.

THE LOCAL TAXATION BILL.

MR. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he is now able to state what further Amendments, if any, to the Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Duties Bill he is prepared to accept?

*MR. RITCHIE: I cannot add anything to what I have already said. I think it an inconvenient course to pursue to ask the Government what Amendments they are prepared to accept. I am prepared to express the views of the Government on the Amendments as they arise.

POSTMEN AND THE TRUCK ACT.

MR. CONYBEARE: I beg to ask the Attorney General whether the Postmaster General has legal power to forfeit the wages of postmen for an alleged breach of rules in cases where the offence involves no dereliction of duty, as where postmen attend a Trade Union meeting when not on duty?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I cannot do more than refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to his previous question on this subject on June 9th. The Postmaster General can make such rules as in his judgment are necessary for the proper conduct of those employed in the Service, and it has been held that the imposing of fines for misconduct is no offence under the Truck Acts.

THE ESTIMATES.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he has further considered the question as the advisability of presenting the Civil Service Estimates this year in a different order to that which has hitherto obtained, so that the later classes of Votes might be submitted to the Committee at a reasonable date, with a view to the adequate discussion of the same; and whether he can now state when it is proposed to present the Post Office and the Revenue Estimates to the Committee?

*MR. W. H. SMITH :The Government have already been endeavouring to meet the wishes of Members as to the order in which the Civil Service Estimates are taken. I cannot yet say on what day the Post Office and Revenue Estimates will be dealt with.

MEDICAL OFFICERS IN ACTION.

MR. MAC NEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what position do Medical Officers occupy during operations in war, and are they ever brought under fire or exposed to danger; what was the mortality among Medical Officers from casualties in action, wounds, and disease during the recent South African, Egyptian, and Burma Wars, and what percentage did the mortality bear to the number of such officers employed; how many officers of the Royal Artillery and the Royal Engineers, the Line, the Commissariat and Pay Departments were killed in the wars referred to, and what was the percentage of mortality from wounds and sickness in each of the above-named branches of the Service; was the Victoria Cross conferred on any officers of the Medical Staff during recent campaigns; and, if so, under what circumstances; what is the meaning of the phrase "Non-Combatant;" if it means that "Non-Combatant" Officers do not occupy the fighting line and are not exposed to danger, why are Medical Officers who are called "Non-Combatant," not kept in a place of safety with the Pay and Commissariat Department; excluding V.C.'s, what honours have Medical Officers received for recent campaigns, and what proportion do the honours received bear per rank to the honours given to Combatant Officers; and why, in the matter of sick leave, are Medical Officers treated differently from other Officers, and why they are only allowed six months' sick leave while Combatants are allowed 12 months?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: Medical Officers are classed as "Non-Combatant," for the simple reason that they are not Combatants, and that there are only these two designations. It is the fact, nevertheless, that their duties take them under fire far more than other Non-Combatants, and that many Medical Officers have been killed or wounded in action, and the Victoria Cross has been conferred upon two of them. Taking six recent campaigns together, the mortality of Line Officers was 5·4 per cent., and that of Medical Officers 3·1 per cent. The question of sick leave is one of expense, as substitutes would be required for Medical Officers. This applies in a much smaller degree in the case of Combatant Officers.

STOKERS IN THE NAVY.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether a special Naval recruiting party has recently visited various industrial centres; how long it has been so engaged, and at what cost; how many stokers and engine-room artificers respectively it has recruited; and what is the present deficiency, if any, of stokers and engine-room artificers respectively?

LORD G. HAMILTON: The recruiting party in question started early in January last, with the object of endeavouring to raise men for the Navy in districts not worked by the ordinary recruiting agents of the Admiralty, the Navy being now mainly supplied with recruits from London and the southern and western counties. The additional cost of the party up to May 31 last is estimated at about £1,200, including the difference between the full and half-pay of the officers employed. The officer in charge reported recently that he had raised, in addition to other ratings, 110 stokers, but no engine-room artificers. The party might have raised more stokers, but the number entered through the ordinary recruiting agencies, partly, no doubt, on account of the publicity given to the proceedings of the recruiting party, was so great that the Admiralty found it necessary last month to stop all entries at the very time when the direct efforts of the recruiting party were meeting with the most success. There is no deficiency at present in the number of stokers or engine-room artificers required.

Admiral MAYNE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, in view of the growing importance of the stokers and leading stokers to the Royal Navy, and of the fact that no improvement has taken place in their position for the last 20 years, he will consider their claims to be placed on the same footing as the seamen class of Her Majesty's Navy, and granted the second class rating, the 2d. a day on re-engaging for the second 10 years, and the progressive pay and other advantages which have been granted to the seamen during that period; and whether he would give a Return showing the comparative percentage of seamen and stokers who re-engage after 10 years' service, and who are lost to the Service by death, desertion, discharge, invaliding, or purchase during the first 10 years?

Lord G. HAMILTON: The hon. Gentleman is under a misapprehension in supposing that no improvement has taken place in the position of stokers and leading stokers in the Royal Navy during the last 20 years. During the last five years their prospects have been improved by the establishment among them of the rating of chief petty officer, carrying with it since 1887 a scale of pay ranging from 2s. 11d. to 3s. 5d. a day, while within the same period an allowance of 1d. a day has been granted for the qualification of "trained man," and 3d. a day for that of "stoker mechanic." Stokers have also been admitted to the coastguard, the privileges of which are now granted to a considerable number of them. I have had a careful comparison made between the position of the stoker ratings and that of the seamen class, and will publish it in the form of a Memorandum.

THE BRADFORD DESTRUCTOR.

Mr. BYRON REED (Bradford, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that it is contemplated to erect a "destructor" upon the confines of Peel Park, in the borough of Bradford; whether he has ascertained that this proposal is obnoxious to the adjacent inhabitants; and whether the Local Government Board can make to the Local Authorities such representations as will prevent the carrying out of the project, with its attendant annoyances to a crowded population, and its probable detriment to the herbage of the park and the enjoyment of those who frequent it?

*Mr. RITCHIE: The Local Government Board have received representations with reference to the erection of a destructor in the neighbourhood of Peel Park, Bradford, which it is stated is proposed to be erected by the Town Council of the borough. The matter is not one in which the Board have any jurisdiction, unless it is proposed to defray the cost of the destructor out of moneys raised by loan. If any application should be made to the Board for their sanction to a loan for this purpose, they will, before arriving at a decision in the matter, direct a Local Inquiry, at which all persons interested will have an opportunity of submitting any representations they may think necessary. I may add that since notice was given of the question I have received a communication from the Town Clerk of Bradford, in which it is stated that the proposed site of the destructor is an old disused quarry, and not in a populous locality; that Peel Park is the property of the Corporation and is highly valued by them, and that they would be the last persons to do any act that could possibly operate to its detriment; and that the proposed building which will be used solely for the purification by fire of what is known as dry ash-pit refuse, is to be constructed on a principle, the result of long and costly experiments by the Corporation, which will secure the complete destruction of all offensive emanations.

Mr. BYRON REED: Arising out of the answer, may I ask if I am to understand the right hon. Gentleman that it is not in the power of the Local Government Board to send down an Inspector to the locality to ascertain the facts?

*Mr. RITCHIE: Oh, yes; it is within our power to do that, but we cannot interfere unless a loan is asked for.

PRISON CLERKS.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Report of the Departmental Committee inquiring into the complaints of clerks serving in Her Majesty's Prisons, which, on the 5th instant, was promised "in a few days," is now in the hands of the Commissioners of Prisons, and if they have been instructed to communicate it to the clerks in question?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have only to-day received the Report in question. Until I have had time to consider it, and to confer with the Commissioners with regard to it, I am not in a position to say when or in what manner any communication on the subject will be made to the Prison clerks.

INLAND REVENUE SALARIES.

MR. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether a decision has yet been arrived at respecting the Petition of the officers of the Inland Revenue, praying for an improvement in their scale of salaries and their general treatment; and, if so, when it is probable the result may be announced?

***MR. GOSCHEN**: I have had this matter under my personal consideration, and have referred to the Board of Inland Revenue for further information. When their Report is received, I hope to arrive at an early decision.

WATERFORD PROSECUTIONS.

MR. P. J. POWER (Waterford, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. C. P. Redmond, editor of the *Waterford News*, has been sentenced by Messrs. Considine and Irwin at Waterford on June 6th, to three months' imprisonment for publishing a resolution of the Kilgobinet branch of the Irish National League; whether Mr. Redmond was sentenced to a further term of imprisonment for publishing in another issue of the *Waterford News* another resolution of the same branch; whether Mr. Redmond was convicted on a third charge, stated by the Court to be a graver offence than the other charges, to 14 days' imprisonment, and ordered at the expiration of that period to enter into security himself in the sum of £200, and two sureties of £100 each, to be of good behaviour, or in default to go to prison for four months; whether there is an appeal from the last sentence; whether the Magistrates refused to impose a sentence which would give a right of appeal; whether the same course of refusing an appeal has not been adopted recently by the same Magistrates in the case of Mr. Fisher, editor of the *Munster Express;* and whether he is aware that every decision of Messrs. Considine and Irwin brought before Judge Waters has been reversed by him?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I must ask the hon. Member to defer this question. I have not received a full Report on the case yet.

THE STRAITS SETTLEMENTS.

MR. THOMAS SUTHERLAND Greenock): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies if it may be understood that the final decision as to the increased military contribution proposed to be levied on the Straits Settlements will remain in abeyance until the promised Correspondence and Papers are in possession of the House?

***BARON H. DE WORMS**: As the Correspondence which it is proposed to give to Parliament will not be complete unless it comprises the final decision of Her Majesty's Government, I am afraid that it would not be possible that the decision should remain in abeyance until the Papers are in the possession of the House.

SIR HERCULES ROBINSON.

SIR DONALD CURRIE (Perthshire, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will be good enough to lay upon the Table of the House copies of the Letter from the Foreign Office, dated the 12th February, 1889, addressed to the Colonial Office, with the enclosure therein referred to; also Sir Hercules Robinson's Despatch to Lord Knutsford, dated the 15th April, 1889 (No. 270), with the enclosure to the said Letter, being a Minute of the Prime Minister of the Cape, Sir Gordon Sprigg, addressed to the Governor of Cape Colony, and dated Cape Town, 9th April, 1889?

***SIR J. FERGUSSON**: I cannot answer without notice; but as the Papers include a document written by a Foreign Ambassador, I do not think I can promise the Papers.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): What will be the business to-morrow?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: In pursuance of an undertaking that has been given, the Police Vote in Supply will be taken to-morrow, when the question of the position of the Metropolitan Police may be discussed. After that the Votes in Supply will be taken in their regular order.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Will any Papers, with reference to the relations between the Home Secretary and Mr. Monro, be laid on the Table before the Debate?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: If there are any Papers which can properly be laid upon the Table of the House relating to the relations that exist between the Home Secretary and the Commissioner of Police I will take care that they are placed in the hands of Members to-morrow.

REFORMATORY SCHOOLS BILL [LORDS].

Bill read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 347.]

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS BILL [LORDS].

Bill read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 348.]

YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS BILL [LORDS].

Bill read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 349.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LOCAL TAXATION (CUSTOMS AND EXCISE) DUTIES BILL.—(No. 244.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Question put, "That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill.

(5.20.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 228; Noes 224.—(Div. List, No. 148.)

(5.36.) MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I beg leave to move, Sir, that you report Progress. I think after this Division it is really an abuse of the forms of the House for the Government to persevere with this Bill. The House of Commons has now decisively pronounced against them. In order to give the Government an opportunity of re-considering their position, I beg to move that you report Progress.

(5.37.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman report Progress and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor.*)

*(5.37.) MR. W. H. SMITH: The hon. Gentleman will not be surprised to hear that I do not agree with him. The Government do not think that the House has decisively pronounced against them.

An hon. MEMBER: Not yet.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: No, not yet. On Tuesday evening when Progress was reported the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) was in the middle of his speech moving the rejection of the 1st clause, and it was expected that to-night he would continue his speech. Right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite have had the advantage of a surprise, and they deserve full credit for it in every respect; whatever it amounts to in the country and the House of Commons they have the credit of it. We propose to proceed with the ordinary business.

(5.39.) MR. STOREY (Sunderland): Perhaps I may be permitted a word in reply to the observations of the right hon. Gentleman. It is perfectly true that I got the better portion of my speech delivered the night before last, but the right hon. Gentleman will not say that because I got through the more important part of my speech on that occasion I am, therefore, compelled to go on with it this afternoon. It seems to me he is never satisfied. If we speak at length, he says we are obstructive; if we do not speak at all, he says we take him by surprise. The Government have taken the people of this country by surprise, and I think it is probable that before long the people of the country will surprise them. So far as the present Motion is concerned, I have no desire to prevent business going on. I hate the Bill, and I am delighted that the Government have brought it in. I propose for one to continue my opposition to it, and I think the majority of the Members of the House will end either by opposing it or by expressing a significant opinion by their absence, so that in the end what we hoped to achieve this afternoon will be after all accomplished.

(5.42.) MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven): As an old Member of this House, I beg entirely to differ from the hon. Member who has made this Motion. I heard the speech, or part of a speech, which was delivered by the hon. Member for Sunderland when we were last in Committee. To-day, before the Question was put, I observed what was passing on the Opposition Benches. I saw hon. Members in close conversation, and I saw their gestures and what took place between hon. Members below the Gangway opposite and their Front Bench. Anyone who witnessed what occurred could not help but form his own conclusion that the Committee was purposely taken by surprise.

(5.43.) MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): The purpose of this Motion made by my hon. Friend, if I may venture to construe it, was to make a representation to the Government and to suggest to the Government the advisableness of withdrawing the Bill. It was in our power to have continued the Debate on the first clause by advancing arguments in support of its rejection, but we trusted to expedite business by foregoing our privilege of continuing the Debate. My hon. Friend having gained the object of this Motion—namely, to give the right hon. Gentleman the leader of the House an opportunity of declaring the intention of the Government—I do not think the Motion ought to be pressed to a Division. Of course, I need not say how deeply I regret the course the Government are pursuing. Still, in the circumstances, the opportunity having been afforded, we ought not to consume time by taking another Division; and, therefore, I hope my hon. Friend will withdraw the Motion.

(5.45.) MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I made it, as the right hon. Gentleman correctly says, for the purpose of giving

the Government a last opportunity of escaping. ["Not last."] Well, last but one; but as they have not taken it, of course I shall not persevere with my Motion.

(5.45.) MR. T. M. HEALY: I notice that the Irish Secretary is looking extremely pleased at what has occurred—["Order."]

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 2.

(5.45.) MR. S. WILLIAMSON (Kilmarnock, &c.): I beg to move, in Clause 2, page 2, line 2, to leave out "Out of." I move this Amendment with the object of introducing the proposal contained in a second Amendment on the Paper, which proposes that the Scotch share of the money shall be devoted to the purpose of entirely freeing parents in Scotland from the liability of paying school fees, and also for the creation, extension, and improvement of fishery harbours on the coast of Scotland, as against the Government proposal for buying out public houses. I can safely say that in Scotland the entire feeling of the people is against the Government in this matter. I have presented many Petitions against the Government proposals, and though I have presented three in favour of them, those have been from Wine and Spirit and Beer Associations. I have not received for presentation a single Petition from a public meeting of citizens in favour of the Bill, but the strongest expressions of feeling against it have reached me from all parts of Scotland. It is proposed to hand over an annual grant of £130,000 to Scotland, but the framers of this measure wish to devote a large portion of that sum for the purpose of buying out licences. My proposal is that instead of being put to such a purpose, it should be used in supplementing the grant which has been already given to free the compulsory standards in Scotland, and for extending and improving our fishery harbours. The need of proper fishery harbours is much felt in Scotland. There are several small villages and towns without the resources or the means of providing harbour accommodation, and the want is all the more felt now that large boats are being used and that steam trawling is being carried on. In regard to the apportionment of the money, I would suggest that £50,000 should be given for harbours, and £70,000 should be given for the complete freeing of education—so far as the payment of fees is concerned. This sum, I believe, will be enough—in fact, there will be a certain small balance left to be dealt with. It is, of course, in the competency of the Committee to alter these figures, but the object of my Amendment is simply to bring up the question of the creation and improvement of harbours in Scotland and the question of education, as opposed to the policy of buying up the public houses. I sincerely hope that the object I have in view will be acceptable to the House.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 2, to leave out the words "Out of."—(*Mr. S. Williamson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'Out of' stand part of the Clause."

(5.49.) MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.): I desire to support the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Kilmarnoch Burghs, as I understand it is competent for us to discuss the propriety of applying the money allocated to Scotland under this Bill for the purpose for which the hon. Member would design it, or the purpose for which it is designed by the Government. I must say I think the Government have exhibited an unusual degree of perverse ingenuity in the number of vexed and difficult questions they have succeeded in raising by this Bill and this clause. They have raised the whole question of licensing and of the proprietors of licences being bought out by the County authorities. They have raised the whole question of temperance as it affects the whole of the United Kingdom—and no doubt it is known to the Government themselves that this is an extremely thorny question. But they have raised also another, a still more difficult and delicate question, and that is how far this House is going to impose its will upon the Scotch Members assembled here. There has been a growing irritation since this Government came into power as to the manner in which Scotch Members have been perpetually outvoted on Scotch questions. Hitherto Her Majesty's Government have shown their willingness to use their voting power in refusing such Amendments of the law as Scotch Members desire, but now they are taking a step forward in this direction, forcing down our throats alterations in the law against which the great majority of Scotch Members are resolutely opposed, backed, I will undertake to say, by the great majority of the Scotch constituencies. I will go so far as to say there is no question affecting our social life in which our constituencies take a deeper interest than this question of temperance legislation. It may be that our people suffer more from the vice of intemperance, or it may be that our people more appreciate the far-reaching consequences of these evils, but it is certain that the Scotch people are deeply anxious by all means in their power to put an end to this evil, and it is quite certain that we Scotch Members have received more representations, more petitions, on this one subject in the last two or three weeks than upon almost any subject which has come before the Scotch constituencies in recent years. I have myself presented many petitions, and I have received numerous letters, not only from members of my own Party, but from those opposed to me, condemning the Government proposals, and I think every one of my colleagues has had similar experience. How are our representations treated? The Committee is almost without English Conservative Members; they do not care to hear our arguments and follow our discussions; we are ready to represent the distinction there is between our position in this matter and the position in England, but our arguments, so far as English Conservative Members are concerned, are addressed to empty Benches. No apology is needed for stating our case adequately; we shall make our protest, and English as well as Scotch constituencies will judge of the manner in which we are treated. First, let me point out that the feeling in Scotland against this Bill comes from either Party, and I may illustrate this by reference to the chief burgh in the constituency I represent. The temperance feeling there is as strong among the Conservatives as among the Liberals. When the Earlier Closing Bill was before the House, a Bill with the object of enabling burghs in Scotland to close public houses an hour earlier than heretofore, a public meeting was convened in my constituency, and it was resolved by the Town Council to take a *plébiscite* of the population on the subject. The Provost of the town was Chairman of the Committee to carry out the arrangements, and the Town Clerk was Secretary. Voting papers were sent out to the 4,088 ratepayers in the burgh, and, as my hon. Friends know, Dumfries for a Scotch burgh contains a very considerable number of Conservatives. Out of those who returned voting papers, 2,472 were in favour of putting the Act in force, and only 313 were against it. It is, therefore, shown that the opinion is not confined to temperance fanatics, Radicals, and such-like objectionable classes, mistrusted by hon. Gentlemen opposite, but the respectable Conservative classes joined with the Liberals in what they believed to be the interests of temperance. Now, the Government say this is a temperance Bill, and a Member of the Government must needs have command of his countenance when he says so, and Party zeal must have blinded the judgment of any hon. Member who seriously believes this. Out of the Bill I suppose Scotland will get £50,000 a year, for the purpose of extinguishing licences, and these licensed houses in Scotland are worth £20,000,000 at a low valuation. If my calculation is correct, then 400 years are required before existing licences can be abolished. Take the case of Dumfries—and I suppose every hon. Member will be apt to find an illustration in his own constituency—in Dumfries there are 82 licensed houses, each worth I suppose on an average £1,000, a total of £82,000. The portion of this grant falling to Dumfries would be £224 a year, so it is quite apparent no tangible progress can be made towards the end all hon. Members in their hearts desire by means of such proposals as these. But this by no means represents the uselessness and in utility of the measure. Hon. Gentlemen opposite forget that when you take away three or four or more licences you thereby progressively increase the value of the remaining licences you do not take away. Suppose in one particular part of a burgh you have five licences, if you destroy one you do not destroy all the trade carried on by that house, but 90 per cent. of it probably goes to the remaining four houses,

and their value is thereby increased. Then, when you destroy another of the four 90 per cent. of the trade of the second house is transferred to the three remaining houses; therefore, when you propose to devote a certain sum to the buying up of licences, remember a great deal of the money you spend is re-invested at once by the nature of your operation in increasing the value of other remaining houses. It is the most thriftless system that can be devised. If we are to buy up licensed houses, a policy I repudiate, at least we should do so as the hon. Member for Birmingham suggested, purchasing them *en bloc*, not buying them on a system which obliges us to pay for them over again successively. This leads me to say a word or two upon the question, what is the real legal position? Are we bound to buy up public houses before we extinguish them? If we are bound in honour or by the legal rights and position of publicans to buy the licences, it will be one of the greatest calamities to the cause of temperance that can be imagined. But I entirely deny that there is such legal right, and I must express my satisfaction at seeing the Solicitor General present, inasmuch as I shall have to say something upon the attitude he and his learned colleague the Attorney General have thought proper to take up in regard to this matter. Two years ago Her Majesty's Government brought in a Bill, one clause of which frankly recognised, so far as England was concerned, that the publicans had a vested interest in their licences. The clause was contested in the House, and the Solicitor General took occasion to say that if an on-licence was refused renewal upon a public ground, as, for example, that it was not necessary to renew it in the public interest, the Court could interfere by what is called a mandamus to compel the Magistrate to renew it. Subsequently a case was decided which really settled the matter beyond all possible doubt or controversy. By the case "Sharp *v.* Wakefield" it was decided, and I am now quoting from the authorised version, that—

> "The discretion of the Justices as to granting and refusing a licence by way of renewal, under the Licensing Act of 1828 and the Licensing Acts of 1872 and 1874, in respect of exciseable liquors to be drunk on the premises, is absolute provided it be exercised judicially.'

Let me state what the facts of the case were. On an application to the Justices, under the Licensing Act of 1828, for a renewal of a licence to sell exciseable liquor by retail to be drunk on the premises, the Justices refused to renew the licence, on the ground of the remoteness of the inn from police supervision and the character and the necessities of the neighbourhood. An appeal to the Quarter Sessions was dismissed, and on a case being stated for the opinion of the Court, Lord Esher, the Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Fry, and Lord Justice Lopes, confirming the judgment of the Court of Queen's Bench, held that the discretion vested in the Justices under the Licensing Act of 1828 had not been affected by the Licensing Acts of 1872 and 1874, and that it was, therefore, competent for them to withhold the licence on the grounds stated. I do not understand what the Solicitor General and the Attorney General mean when they tell us that that case does not decide the question which is in issue before us now. In my judgment it decides the question as clearly as any decision possibly can decide any question. The Attorney General appears to have expressed the opinion that it could not be a judicial exercise of discretion if the discretion was so exercised as to refuse a licence to a respectable and proper and worthy man. By the decision in the case of Sharp *v.* Wakefield, the contrary is expressly laid down, and when we are considering as a matter of policy the wisdom or the unwisdom of entering upon a purchase of public houses with public money, the very root of our investigations must necessarily be what are the legal rights possessed by the publicans or the owners of the public houses. I say those legal rights admit of the licences being refused. As to the practice in Scotland regarding the renewal of licences, I have no doubt hon. Gentleman around me will be able to quote instance after instance in which renewals have been refused in different parts of Scotland without any compensation at all. In the Burgh of Dumfries there were, 20 years ago, 120 licences; now there are only 82 licences. In a few cases, no doubt, licences have been withdrawn by reason of conviction for offences. That, of course, does not enter into the consideration. But the remainder have been extinguished in this manner. It has been the rule of the Bench to refuse renewals wherever the property has changed hands, or wherever the tenant has died, or has removed. There have only been two classes of exceptions to this rule. The first class is that of hotels, not public houses in the proper sense of the word, but houses of general entertainment; and the second is a case where a widow, for example, or some other near relative has been left, and where there has been some sympathy felt for her, and also where it has has been proved that the house has been exceptionally well conducted. Under these circumstances the licence has been renewed to the survivor. But such has been the operation of this rule or practice of the Bench that we have succeeded in reducing the licences in 20 years by something over 30 per cent. Of course, I need not assure the Committee that in no single case has any compensation been asked or paid by any human being. What must necessarily be the effect of the clause under discussion in a place like Dumfries? It is very easy to say that you reserve, as you do reserve in the Bill, the power of the Licensing Justices to use all the discretionary authority they have at the present time, but is it not perfectly obvious that the fact of enabling County Councils to buy public houses for the purpose of extinguishing them will set up two methods of extinguishing licences, one the rival of the other? There will be the old method of refusing to renew without compensation, and there will be the other method of buying up the licences with full compensation. Can anybody doubt that when these are alongside of each other, these two different methods, one which appears to be compassionate and kindly, and the other which appears by contrast to be harsh and unfeeling, the sympathy of the public will go in the direction of buying or giving compensation, instead of in the direction of refusing to renew the licence, as has heretofore been the rule. It cannot be otherwise, and when right hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Treasury Bench point with exultation to the fact that the legal position is intended to be reserved, they entirely forget the moral effect of a law of this kind. Suppose, for example, they carry their proposition, and give County Councils the power of granting and renewing licences, and at the same time give them the power of buying licences, is it not obvious that the County Councils will practically be disabled from using the most beneficial power of refusing renewal of licences, but will be driven by public opinion into the use of the power of purchase? That is the view of my constituents. A public meeting in Dumfries has condemned the proposals of the Government. Is it a statesmanlike course to force upon Scotland a clause of this character? Hon. Gentlemen opposite know perfectly well that a majority of two to one, perhaps a great deal more than two to one, of the Scotch Members are resisting this Bill. Why is it that in a matter of this kind they insist on ruthlessly using their majority, without taking the trouble to come in and hear what our arguments are? We have been told by the President of the Local Government Board that the Government do not regard this Bill as a final settlement of the matter, that before the introduction of the Bill they received no hint, either from the brewers or the publicans, or any branch of the trade, that any of the provisions of the Bill were wanted, and that a general Bill, dealing with the entire question of compensation, will be introduced before long. Under these circumstances, it requires some ingenuity to understand what can be the motive of the Government in the dogged determination they seem to evince to impose the Bill upon the reluctant Members for Scotland. My belief is that the real reason is not to be found merely in what I may call a feeling of pride, but in the fact that the public house trade, like other trades, is keen enough to scent an advantage. It did not take the trade long to find out that the Bill contained within it a principle which would make it very difficult hereafter to interfere, in any manner, with their trade, and they have, no doubt, put on the Government pressure, pressure of that character which is understood when it comes from keen and strong political supporters. Although it may have been brought in in the cause of temperance, the Bill has now become nothing more than a flagrant job in the interest of the owners of public house prosperity, and I believe that, if the Government do persevere with it, it will prove to be as disastrous to them as it will be injurious to the best interests of the country.

*(6.20.) MR. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright): My hon. and learned Friend has pointed out when this Bill passes there will be two methods of putting down public houses, and he maintains that the Local Authority will, no doubt, still exercise their authority, but they will be very unwilling to do so. I contend that they will be more willing to do so than before, because they will not only have the law on their side, but they will have a certain amount of money with which to assist people to get out of their public houses. Then the hon. and learned Gentleman complained that English opinion is continually voting down Scotch opinion. [*Cheers.*] Hon. Gentlemen who cheer must know that Scotch opinion very often rules down English opinion. If it were not for the Irish and Scotch opinion, I should like to know what would be the position of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Just what it is.

*MR. MARK STEWART: Just what it is means 150 votes upon a Division, and instead of the Government winning by 4 votes to-night, their majority would have been more like 154. The hon. and learned Gentleman also complained that the Conservative Members were not present to listen to his arguments, but if he looked around him he would have found that the Opposition Benches were comparatively empty.

MR. R. T. REID: I did not complain that Conservative Members did not listen to what I said, but that they never listened to what any Scotch Member said.

*MR. MARK STEWART: With the exception of a few minutes, when I was called out of the House, I sat through the whole of the hon. and learned Gentleman's remarks. Reference has been made to the Petitions presented to the House, but we know very well how Petitions are manufactured. Again, we know how public meetings are called together. People do not care to differ with what is said at meetings, but when a poll takes place things are very different. Besides, all the Petitions are not on one side; only yesterday a Petition from Scotland, signed by between 40,000 and 50,000 people, was presented in favour of the proposals; and I never recollect receiving so many Petitions in favour of any Government measure. It is quite possible that a large number of licences may be done away with by this Bill. It may only be necessary to give some people who are turned out of their public houses, £50 or £100, but the granting of this compensation, or, properly speaking, purchase money, would take the edge off the feeling in the country, that it would be a hard thing to turn men out of their houses without giving them some recompense. It is said that a man gets a licence for nothing, but immediately obtains a large profit thereby. But the man pays for the licence he gets; although he does get his certificate for nothing. He has to pay a heavy duty in order to trade, and if you allow him to trade you sanction his business. Under all the circumstances, I shall oppose this Amendment.

(6.28.) SIR G. TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): There are great differences between Scotland and England and Wales, which, I think, should be pointed out at the earliest opportunity. The first difference is the enormous strength and universality of the feeling on this question in Scotland as expressed not indistinctly by the Divisions in this House. I am not exaggerating when I say that on what was practically the Second Reading Division, a Division far less favourable than that Second Reading Division which we got early in the 1st clause, and still less favourable than that third Second Reading Division which we got this afternoon—I am not exaggerating when I say that even in the most unfavourable of these Divisions, there were, taking the pairs into account, 46 Scotch Members against the Bill to 23 for it. These 23 not only included the devoted adherents of the Government who, from Party motives we can all respect, stuck to the Government in their difficulty, but included several official Members. The hon. Member who who has just spoken says that resolutions have been passed at public meetings, and Petitions have been signed, under misapprehension of the nature of this Bill, but I will venture to say no Scotch Member thinks his countrymen do not understand this question most thoroughly, and also the nature of this monopoly, from which the holders derive large gains each year; from a monopoly not given, as in times past monopolies were supposed to be given, for public service, and for which this Bill will provide compensation by payment of a capital sum. The Scotch people understand this question, and the great mass of the people suffer from the drink traffic. I do not exaggerate when I say the feeling is universal in Scotland among the mass of the people against this Bill; there is a difference of degree in the opinion in Scotland and in England, and, strong as the feeling may be in England, it is stronger in Scotland. There is this distinction, too, which I hope Members will keep in view, that we are in a position of advantage in proposing a diversion of these funds from the purpose proposed in the Bill. When English Members make similar proposals, they are under the disadvantage of proposing the appropriation of money to purposes for which they have to invent the machinery. But we, thanks to the hon. Member for Aberdeen (Dr. Hunter), and the hon. Member for the College Division (Dr. Cameron), have at the moment the machinery for the distribution in excellent working order. We have the machinery for making payment of fees in Scotch schools, and we do not ask now to set up new machinary for public expenditure, but only for more money to be devoted to a purpose of great utility, and by machinery we have now at work. We would have fees abolished, and make education free in every school throughout Scotland, and in every standard, compulsory and non-compulsory alike. I take it, we may all safely vote for this Amendment, which goes against the clause as a whole, and, if we should carry this Amendment, and the Government should go on with the Bill, it would be easy to frame Amendments to enable the whole of the money to be devoted to the payment of fees in elementary schools. But it is quite another matter when this Amendment is passed, and we come to the second Amendment of my hon. Friend. I must own that that Amendment will place many of us in a great difficulty, because the great feeling among Scotch

Members is in favour of applying this money to the extinguishing of fees in fee-paying schools, and, therefore, I hope my hon. Friend (Mr. Williamson) will alter his Amendment so as to enable us to take a vote upon that proposal. But the present Amendment is directed to defeating that part of the clause to which we all object—that is to say, to applying this money to buying up public houses. What a preposterous proposal is that now before us! In Scotland there are 15,400 licences to 3,750,000 of people, a proportion of one to every 212 people, very nearly the proportion in England where it is one to every 202 inhabitants. I only call attention to this because it enables us to get at the minimum cost of a public house in Scotland. We know that in England it is, roughly speaking, £2,000, and I assume that in Scotland it is about the same, or say, an average of £2,000, for Scotland is a country at least as rich as England. Now, Glasgow will receive, so far as I can see, an eighth of the sum allotted to Scotland, or £5,000; so, in order to reduce the licensed houses in Glasgow by 10 per cent. we must wait 80 years. But that is not all, because as licences are reduced, by the process admirably explained by my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Reid) they become gradually, and indeed rapidly in some cases, more valuable. My hon. and learned Friend did not put the case so strongly as he might have done, for the gross earnings of an extinguished public house will become the net gains of the remaining houses; the staff and machinery of the remaining houses remain as they were, and the trade transferred from the bought-up house becomes a net gain added to the existing trade. The hon. Member for Kirkcudbright (Mr. M. Stewart) says the number of licences will be reduced because the men in smaller houses will be willing to take small sums to get out of the business; but, on the contrary, I believe if this Bill passes you will do away with the natural process of putting down public houses on public grounds, which now goes on much faster than some Members seem to think. I am glad to think that the increase of temperance feeling, the increase of public spirit among the wealthier classes, is leading to a public spirited suppression of drink shops by landlords, even when this means a loss to the landlord's income. But now, when you establish the principle that the giving up of a licence should be accompanied by compensation, men will be less willing on public grounds to give up the profit of the trade, and will hold out for compensation. The hon. Member laughs at the idea of public house occupiers profiting by the misconducting of their houses; but I have no doubt that if County Councils use the Bill at all they will use it to put down the worst houses, and in proportion to the evil effect of a house will be the pressure upon a County Council to buy it. I hope every Liberal Member and every Independent Member on the other side will vote with Scotch Members for this Amendment, and after that it will be for Scotch opinion to decide how the fund shall be appropriated.

*(6.42.) MR. SOMERVELL (Ayr, &c.): I will not occupy the time of the Committee at any length in referring to the extraordinary position the right hon. Gentleman has taken up. The Mover of this Amendment asks us to omit these innocent-looking words, with an object in view which he has stated, and the right hon. Gentleman, in supporting the Amendment, appeals to the hon. Member to withdraw the Amendment of which he has given notice, and goes back over well-trodden ground. There was an Amendment moved on the Second Reading stage of the Bill which distinctly brought to issue the questions discussed by the hon. Member for Dumfries and the right hon. Gentleman. We divided on the Second Reading of the Bill on the distinct question whether the money should be divided in the manner provided in this measure or not, and we affirmed the principle in the Bill, and I maintain that it is an abuse of the forms of the House to occupy time in discussing a principle which has already been affirmed by a majority. And what are the arguments used? The hon. and learned Member for Dumfries informs us that public houses in Scotland are worth £20,000,000, and the right hon. Gentleman (Sir G. Trevelyan), absolutely ignorant as to the value of these houses, but desirous of following out the logical law of laying down hypothetical premises argues that because in England a public house is

worth £2,000, in Scotland they must, because there are fewer of them, be worth a good deal more. This might be an interesting thesis to discuss before a debating society, but I question if it can have any influence upon a Vote in this House. We desire not to argue upon hypothetical premises, we desire to be instructed upon the facts of the case. The hon. and learned Member for Dumfries, after laying down the fact that public houses in Scotland are worth £20,000,000, occupied himself for some time, as an English lawyer, in discussing the action "Sharp *v.* Wakefield," and afterwards told us that public house licences are liable to be taken away without any reason, and, therefore, they could have no value at all.

MR. R. T. REID: I said nothing of the kind.

*MR. SOMERVELL: We have had an interesting illustration of putting an abstract proposition into concrete terms. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian set the example, and the hon. Member for Dumfries has followed it, both he and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridgeton, having attempted first to lay down an abstract proposition, and, when they came to a concrete idea, contradicted themselves entirely. Much has been said with regard to the feeling of Scotland on this subject, and we have been told that that feeling is entirely in support of hon. Members opposite. I cannot agree with that proposition at all. A large majority of the signatures in Petitions from Scotland are in favour of this Bill as it passed the Second Reading, and in my own case the leading temperance journal in Scotland has recognised that I was elected after definitely stating that I was in favour of the proposals of the Bill, giving this power to County Councils. This is a definite statement by a leader of the Temperance Party. Undoubtedly a great number of Petitions have been presented against the Bill, but the names on these Petitions appear like Falstaff's ragged regiment again and again. I know one small village which has sent up five Petitions signed by the same persons sometimes as inhabitants, sometimes as Members of the Radical Association, as members of the Ladies Association, as members of the Good Templars Lodge, and so on. Like a theatrical army, they cross the stage and re-appear again under another banner. I have here a letter addressed to me by one of my constituents, a leading member of the Free Church, and prominent in the temperance cause, and who, until 1886, was a prominent member of the then United Liberal Party in the district. He writes—

> "Being all my days a temperance man, the wire-pullers of this part have been most anxious that I should do something with the Temperance Party in opposition to the Government measure which they represent for the first time creates a vested interest in a licence. Not only would I not promise to do as they advised, but I stated my opinion that the Bill was an honest attempt on the part of the Government to reduce the number of licences, and as a temperance man that was what I wanted. They hold this is a dodge to pay publicans who are dispossessed the full value of their licences. I, on theother hand, take the word of Mr. Goschen and Mr. Ritchie that those who drink spirits and sell them are to be the compensators. I do not approve of putting a tax on the ratepayers to buy out the publicans, but I see no tendency to do this, and therefore those who wish the Temperrnce Party to prosper will accept the Government proposals as a boon."

[*Cries of* "Name."] My correspondent is a prominent member of the Temperance Party, and I will hand the letter to any hon. Member who desires to satisfy his curiosity, but I think I had better follow the example of the hon. Member opposite and not make the name public. After these expressions of opinion I do not think hon. Members opposite are entitled to say that temperance feeling in Scotland is unanimous against the Government proposal. We have been informed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian that the opinion of England has changed since the last election. There is, undoubtedly, at the present time a majority of Members representing Scotland on the other side of the House, and if the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman is correct, for my own part, I am equally entitled to say that those who sit on this side of the House now represent the opinion of the majority of the people of Scotland. Scotch Members opposite have been elected by those who favour local option, anti-vaccination, and all the extreme views of people who place those views before Party or the Empire. But on any broad question the people of Scotland are in accordance with the present policy of Her Majesty's Government. I deny, therefore, that hon. Members opposite are entitled to say that they represent the people of Scotland. But I do not care whether they represent the majority of the people of Scotland or not. The principle of government in this country is government by Party, and the Party to which I belong is at present in the majority in the United Kingdom, and it is the bounden duty, taking this Parliament as representing the people of the United Kingdom, of the Government of the day to introduce and pass legislation which is in accordance with the views of their supporters who sit behind them. When this fact is realised, whether we have been in the past, or whether we are at the moment, representatives of the majority, when the next appeal comes, our Party will be returned by a considerable majority of the sensible people of Scotland. I must apologise for having detained the Committee so long against my intention. I have taken the opportunity to express my views upon the Bill, views which I venture to say are held by a majority of the people of Scotland, and held almost unanimously by the Party to which I belong. I hope the Committee will support the principle which has been laid down on the Second Reading, and pass into law a Bill which is an honest attempt to deal with several vexed questions, and which, when it becomes law, will be realised to be one of the greatest boons bestowed upon the country by Her Majesty's Government.

*(6.57.) MR. ASQUITH (Fife, East): I trust that Scotch Members will not be deterred by the minatory tones and gestures of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down from expressing their opinion fully and freely upon this most important clause. The hon. Member appears to be gifted with a buoyant faith in the future of his Party in Scotland, and it is to be hoped, for the credit of his reputation as a political prophet, that his faith is based on more substantial evidence than that which he has brought forward with regard to the opinion of the Temperance Party in that country. He produced a letter from some un-named correspondent, who is prepared to give a blank cheque to the right hon. Gentlemen the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the President of the Local Government Board, but we should like to know a little more about the antecedents of this remarkably credulous temperance man. As to the hon. Gentleman's confident statement as to the state of public opinion in Scotland, we challenge the hon. Member, and the Party to which he belongs, to give us an opportunity of testing the feeling of Scotland, and as long as they decline to do so we shall continue to assert our right to be considered as the authentic exponents of public opinion in that country. From the evidence which reaches us we know that the people of Scotland are well nigh unanimous, without distinction of Party, in their opposition to these clauses, and in this House we shall offer the most strenuous and unremitting opposition to them. The history of this Bill and of these two clauses is a chapter of paradoxes. These clauses have been introduced avowedly to promote the cause of temperance. These clauses are bitterly opposed by every temperance organisation in Scotland. These are clauses in support of which there are at this moment—so we are informed—Petitions lying for signature in every gin palace and every public house in Scotland. Her Majesty's Government suppose, at least we must believe so, that they know better than anybody else in the world what will be the effect of their own measure. But I must say it is a curious state of circumstances which obliges them to assume that the Temperance Party on the one hand, and the publicans upon the other, two of the shrewdest, the most energetic, and most hostile bodies of men to be found in the country, are, at one and the same time, victims of one and the same hallucination. It is possible that Her Majesty's Government may be right, and both the teetotalers and publicans are wrong. But I venture to think that the probabilities point in the opposite direction. I assert broadly and explicitly, with reference to this clause, that if it passes into the Statute Book, it will constitute for all time the legislative charter of the liquor trade. The matter lies really in a nutshell. Either there is or there is not, according to the law of Scotland, which is the same as the law of England, a vested interest in the renewal of a licence. If there is not, and we believe there is not, then this clause, for the first time, creates it. If there is now no vested interest in the renewal of a

licence, then this Bill creates a power which cannot co-exist with the discretionary power of non-renewal. It is too grotesque an assumption almost for the imagination to make, that in one and the same district, at one and the same time, we are to have two public bodies—I say two, though they will, as we all know, be merged into one in a few years—one of which is exercising the power of refusing the renewal of a licence by a stroke of the pen and without payment of a penny of compensation, while the other, side by side with it, is exercising the power of buying up licences with public money. That is a difficulty which cannot be got over. The President of the Local Government Board may propose any number of saving clauses and provisoes; they will not avail him. I have said and thought many hard things of the Liberal Unionist Party, but I confess my imagination did not grasp the fact that they could have reached such a stage of moral liquefaction as to accept the salve to their consciences which is to be found in the Amendment of the hon. Member for Grimsby. For my part, I do not believe that any Town or County Council in Scotland will use these powers. Still, we are bound, for the purpose of the argument, to assume that the clause will be put in force. If it is enforced, then I unhesitatingly assert that the creation of such a power is wholly inconsistent, and will be found to be irreconcilable with the continued exercise of the discretionary power of withdrawal of licences. Let us look at the other alternative. Suppose there is now, by law, a vested interest in the renewal of licences in some shadowy form or other. Then I assert, and I challenge contradiction, that this Bill for the first time gives to that interest legislative recognition. We have had some remarkable arguments addressed to us in the course of the Debate. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, for instance, believes, as the Attorney General evidently believes, that there is a law in Scotland as in England, giving a vested interest in the renewal of a licence. If he does not believe that, then his arguments are absolutely unmeaning. The Chancellor of the Exchequer laboured this point greatly. I am a great, a respectful admirer of the debating powers of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and I have witnessed with compassion so fertile and ingenious a dialectician reduced, under stress of the duty of supporting this unhappy Bill, to a condition of controversial beggary. What are the arguments of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on this point? He says there is a vested interest by law in the renewal of a licence. Is there any Act of Parliament, or any provision of any Act of Parliament, which creates or recognises such an interest? The Chancellor of the Exchequer cannot find one. Is there any decision of any Court of Law, any dictum of any individual Judge, which countenances the existence of such an interest? The Chancellor of the Exchequer cannot discover anything of the kind. What does he do? He sets to work to scavenge the by-ways of *Hansard*, and ultimately, after long and painful research, he succeeds in picking out two or three sentences, severed from their context and spoken in a different connection, from speeches made from time to time by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. The right hon. Gentleman has had many compliments paid to him in his time; but I do not know that he has ever had a greater compliment than the suggestion or assumption of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that, the brewers and distillers of this country, among the shrewdest, most prudent, and enterprising of our traders, have allowed themselves to invest tens and hundreds of millions of capital, not upon the faith of any legislative enactment or legal decision, but in reliance upon two or three sentences, not even upon sentences but upon two or three phrases, not even upon two or three phrases, but upon a particular interpretation of a particular phrase of one of his speeches. That is the argument of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I am bound to say that, as we might have expected from him, after two or three days' reflection he felt bound to array this unhappy measure in a rather less tattered garment. He came down here—and I observe he repeats the same argument in the newspapers to-day—and he told us that this Bill only extended to an analogous case a principle which was habitually acted upon by Local Authorities all over the country. That argument is worthy a moment's attention. Let us see what it comes to. The Local Authority, Municipal Corporation, or Railway Company, when they take property for the purposes of a street improvement or public undertaking, have to buy out the various interests in the land which they take. If a public house is included in the property taken, they must buy the interest of the freeholder in the soil and in the bricks and in the mortar. They must then deal with the tenant or occupier. If the occupier has a lease, they must compensate him for it. But whether he has a lease or not, they dispossess him, and they are obliged to pay him compensation for the injury he actually sustains by being dispossessed. Suppose he could carry on his business in the next street, the promoters would then only have to pay the cost of his removal. But if the business is annexed to the premises, and not to the person or the reputation of the trader, and would be lost if removed, then, whether the business be that of a publican, butcher, baker, or candlestick maker, the person dispossessed is undoubtedly entitled to compensation, based on a certain number of years' purchase of the goodwill of the business. I observe that the Chancellor of the Exchequer says in his letter—

> "Why do not the promoters of the public undertaking wait until the Licensing Session comes round, and then go and oppose the renewal of the publicans' licence?"

And these are the gentlemen who talk about judicial discretion? A nice conception they must have of judicial discretion if they imagine that the Local Authority, which has just paid compensation to every other tradesman in the street, can go before the Magistrates and have the impudence to ask them to refuse to renew the licence of the publican for no other reason than that it would save the ratepayers a few hundreds of pounds. The suggestion is worthy to rank with that of the President of the Local Government Board—that if a publican refuses to sell to the County Council at a fair price under this Bill, the County Council might go before the Licensing Authority and ask that the licence should not be renewed.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I never said that.

*MR. ASQUITH: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. Such is the solidarity of the Cabinet that I am sure he will not object to my attributing to him by inadvertence an argument used by the Home Secretary. My hon. and learned Friend has dealt with the argument of the Attorney General as to what is called the judicial discretion given to the Magistrates. The term judicial discretion is not a cabalistic formula; it is a simple phrase, easy to understand, and not difficult to define. A judicial discretion is a discretion which can only be exercised subject to two conditions: In the first place, it must not be exercised until an opportunity has been given to the party affected of being heard. In the second place—and this is the only other necessary ingredient that I know of—it must be a discretion exercised with reference to facts and considerations which are material and relevant to the duty which has to be discharged. Suppose Justices should resolve that houses with red signboards should get their licences, while those with blue signboards should be refused, that would be a non-judicial exercise of their discretion. In 1870, long before the case of "Sharp *v.* Wakefield" was heard of, Justice Lush, one of the acutest Judges that ever sat on the English Bench, said—

> "The Licensing Acts authorise, and, therefore, by implication, require Justices to govern their discretion in granting or withholding licences, by reference not only to the qualification of the person applying, and the suitableness of the house, but to other considerations also. These considerations must include the nature of the locality, the population, the number of houses already licensed, and all other circumstances bearing on the question whether it is fit and proper in the interests of the public, for whose benefit these Acts are passed, that an additional licence should be granted."

These words were spoken in the case of the grant of a new licence. But they were quoted *verbatim* by the Court of Appeal in "Sharp *v.* Wakefield," with the comment that the Justices have precisely the same discretion, neither more nor less, and that they ought to be governed by precisely the same considerations, in deciding as to the renewal of licences. I think that is enough to show that the notion that there is any vested interest whatsoever in the renewal of a licence is a pure invention of the imagination. It is not founded upon any provision of the Statute Law, and it is not supported by any judicial decision. It may be asked, and it is a question that ought carefully to be considered, how, in the absence of legal protection, this vast interest has grown up on such precarious foundations. It is due to two causes. It is due, in the first place, to the laxity of the Licensing Authorities in not enforcing the law. I will not deny that this will be an important consideration when we come to a settlement of the question. But I assert, and I shall have the assent even of hon. Gentlemen opposite, that the lax administration of the law cannot possibly give to those who have profited by it a vested interest in the continued neglect in the future by a public authority of its public duty. The second, and, perhaps, equally important factor, in bringing about this state of things is that the Central Authority has exacted a totally inadequate consideration in return for this profitable monopoly. No one can dispute that if we had adopted the Gottenburg system, or if the Legislature had exercised its undoubted power of enormously raising the Licensing Duty, no publican, or brewer, or those who stand behind them would have had the faintest claim to pecuniary compensation. I have never been a member of the extreme Temperance Party; I do not regard alcohol as a poison; nor do I think that publicans ought to be exterminated. I am disposed to think that there is room both for alcohol and for the sellers of alcohol, and for the consumers of alcohol, within the pale of a civilised community. But that is not the question which we have now before us. When the question does arise—and sooner or later it will—I believe everyone who votes against this clause will feel that he has a perfectly free and unfettered hand in considering how far the publican is entitled to claim some measure of indulgence for the lax administration of the law in the past and the loose practices and usages which have prevailed. When that question arises, we shall be perfectly prepared to deal with it. But, meanwhile, we are not going to assent to this Bill, because the effect of it will be that the brewers, publicans, and distillers will hereafter come before us not as suppliants for indulgence, not as petitioners asking as a matter of bounty for an equitable consideration of the circumstances of the past, but as invested for the first time with a legal title and legal *status*, which it would be confiscation to disregarded.

(7.25.) MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Newington, W.): Sir, in my humble judgment the reason why the publicans have been allowed to obtain this vested interest is that no business whatever could be conducted in this country if it were liable to be put an end to at the close of 12 months. The business of the publican is just as lawful as any other business. As to whether the Magistrates have discretion or not, it is clear, I think, that by law they have that discretion. It is quite clear also, that, having that discretion, they never exercised it, because they knew perfectly well that to exercise it would simply be to put an end to a lawful business. That being so, and this business having grown up as a vested interest, it is clear that the people of this country would be against any suggestion of putting an end to that business, whether by the discretion of the Magistrates or Judges. This vested interest having been allowed to grow up, and money having been invested in it, the House of Commons at any rate could not assent to any proposition which would deprive decent and respectable people of their means of livelihood.

(9.30.) MR. PHILIPPS (Lanark, Mid): The hon. Member opposite found fault with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridgeton for not following the logical law of arguing from a premise. I do not quite understand it. But I may, perhaps, be allowed to point out something the hon. Member did. The hon. Member read a letter from one of his own constituents, or read part of a letter, and when we cried out "name," he offered to show the letter to any Member of the House who had the curiosity to see it. Well, Sir, I had the curiosity to ask to see that letter, but he only offered to let me see a portion of it, and tore off half the letter, which I declined to look at.

An hon. MEMBER: It was a private letter.

MR. PHILIPPS: I do not see how you can say a letter was private that was offered to be shown to anyone in the House.

An hon. MEMBER: There were private portions of it.

MR. PHILIPPS: At any rate, the offer was made generally. Well, Sir, the hon. Member for Ayr has talked about the abuse of the forms of the House. Having only been here two years, I will not attempt to discuss questions of abuse of the forms of the House with hon. Members of the ripe experience of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Ayr. He complained that in some village, the name of which was not given, the people opposed to this Bill had been so frequent in their Petitions, that they had signed them in various capacities; but, so far as I understand his complaint, it was that the men did not sign as women, nor the women as men, nor the children as men or women. But I understand that there was another Petition from North Britain which does not err in any of those respects. The hon. Member also talked about Scotch feeling. If there is one thing I am clear about, it is the feelings of my own constituency, especially the Liberal Unionists in that constituency. Since this Bill was brought in, I have had numerous letters from those Liberal Unionists, saying that, having seen this Bill, they will never again support the Unionist Government. I think the Scotch case ought to be treated separately from that of England, inasmuch as for many years Scotland has enjoyed a separate legislation of its own, namely, Sunday closing; so that there are strong reasons why Scotland should be exempted from the provisions of this Bill. The notion of compensation for licences taken away is entirely repugnant to Scotch feeling, and in Scotland we have a strong precedent in a case wherein licences were taken away without compensation. I allude to the case of the Sheriff's officers and messengers of the Courts of Scotland. These officers are the only persons who could serve writs and make arrests for debts, and there are at least as many of them as there are publicans in Scotland. These officers are licensed, and their licences are granted under very strict conditions; they have to satisfy the Judge as to their character and fitness, and I believe the Judges are not easily satisfied. The licences are only obtained with great difficulty, the licencees having to find two sureties, who give bond for them. This system dated from as far back as the year 1424, and the licences were not for one year only, but, in legal phraseology, *ad vitam aut culpam*. This is a much stronger case than that of the publicans' licences. But by the Citation Act of 1881, and also owing to imprisonment for debt being abolished at the same time, these people are practically ruined, two-thirds of their business, at least, having been taken away from them. This was done only nine years ago, and they have received no compensation. If the Government have money to spare they ought to give it to those Sheriffs' officers and messengers of the Court rather than to the publicans. We have heard about compensation to "the poor publicans," but it is the rich brewers whom the Government have in their eye. Suppose the Bill leads to the lessening of licences by 5 per cent., is there any compensation in the Bill for the barmaids, the pot-boys, and publicans' servants who will be thrown out of work? The pretence of the "poor publicans" is absolutely ridiculous, and will impose only upon those who do not know better. If there is anything which the Government care about, it is making property secure. There is certainly less reason for compensating the publicans of Scotland than anywhere else, because, in the Licensing Court of Scotland, the landlord of licensed premises has no *locus standi*; the Court will not listen to him. In conclusion, I can only express my agreement with the Mover of this Amendment, that, instead of money being given to compensate rich publicans and brewers, it may be applied in the relief of school rates for the benefit of the poorer people of Scotland. Compensation to the publicans is a matter which might well be left to the Scotch people to settle for themselves at some future day, through their own Representatives. We want to leave this Licensing Question over to be settled by the County Councils, and I can assure the House that, whatever the voice of England may be on this question, the voice of Scotland is practically unanimous against those proposals.

(7.38.) MR. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.): The discussion has hitherto not proceeded upon the line of discussing the Amendment before the Committee. If I understand it aright, the effect of passing the Amendment would be to destroy the clause, and the amount for police superannuation and the £40,000 for educational purposes would be gone. ["No!"] I should be unable to vote for the Amendment if that would be the effect of it. On the other hand, the position of Scotland with respect to licences and their extinction is very different from that of England or Ireland. In Ireland, I believe, a legal right exists to have a 12 months' licence renewed. In England there may be an equitable right to have such a licence renewed for 12 months' longer; but it has not yet been decided whether that legal right amounts to a vested interest. But in Scotland the equitable right is non-existent, or, if it exists at all, is much weaker than in England. Therefore, there is a very strong feeling in Scotland against this proposal. How that feeling had grown up is another question; but a very large part of it, I believe, has arisen from the fact that the state of the case, as put in the Bill, has not been fairly represented. From the letters I have received from various constituents I find that the impression has been sown broadcast over the land that it is proposed to create a vested interest where no vested interest exists. Therefore it is material to consider whether a vested interest is created by the Bill. The Government have made a distinct statement that no change is made in the law, and that they are willing to accept the Amendment put on the Paper by the right hon. Member for Grimsby. If that Amendment does not make the matter clear, I hope the Government will go further. For myself I cannot vote for this Amendment, because it would not merely affect the compensation proposals of the Government, but the superannuation of the police. ["No, no!"]

(7.45.) THE CHAIRMAN: As this appears to be a point in dispute, I must say that the effect of the Amendment before the Committee would be to destroy the apportionment altogether, both as regards the compensation to publicans and the police superannuation.

MR. R. T. REID: May I ask, as a point of order, whether, if this Amendment be passed, it would be competent to the Committee to agree to the succeeding Amendments?

THE CHAIRMAN: I think not.

*MR. C. S. PARKER (Perth): The object of the Amendment is to provide money not only for fishery harbours nock in, but also for the relief of school fees.

MR. R. T. REID: May I ask, as a point of order, whether, instead of adopting the language of the hon. Member for Kilmarnock in his Amendment, other language embodying his objects might be adopted?

MR. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.): Supposing the Amendment is lost, would the various Amendments on the Paper qualifying this sub-section still be in order?

THE CHAIRMAN: If the Amendment is lost, all the Amendments to this sub-section would still be retained.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am satisfied by your ruling that I am right in interpreting the effect of the Amendment as I have already done. Therefore the Scotch Members will doubtless re-consider their position and decline to vote for this Amendment, as destructive of the grants for superannuation and education. For my own part, I am unable to vote for the Amendment, although I cannot vote for the application of this £50,000 for the compensation of publicans.

THE CHAIRMAN: In answer to the hon. Member for Dumfries, I may say that it would not be competent for the Committee to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Armagh in substance or in form.

*(7.50.) MR. J. C. BOLTON (Stirling): I desire, Sir, to draw attention to a few facts connected with this licensing

question. I would remind the Committee that legislation for Scotland respecting the control and management of the liquor traffic has hitherto proceeded on different lines from those adopted in England; for instance, in Scotland we have had Sunday closing for upwards of 40 years, while in England there is no Sunday closing at all. Moreover, the year before last, a section of Scotch Members, headed by the Member for the College Division of Glasgow, obtained for the Licensing Authority of Scotland power to sanction a proposal for closing the public houses at an earlier hour. And that proposal has been adopted in Scotland. Moreover, Scotland has been dealt with in a different manner from England in respect of grants in aid, only a year ago, we were allowed in Scotland to devote for educational purposes a large portion of the advance made from the Probate Duty, whereas in England that advance can only be applied to the reduction of the poor's rate. The assent of this House to such an application of the fund in Scotland was given as a concession to the demand of the Scotch Representatives on behalf of the population of Scotland generally. Why should not a similar course be taken on this occasion? The Scotch people are practically unanimous in their objection to any portion of this money being applied to public house compensation. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, who recently in no uncertain terms expressed his anxiety at all times to defer to public opinion, has now an opportunity of proving the sincerity of that statement. The fact that only 23 Scotch Members are in favour of the Government proposals, while 46 are opposed to them, shows very clearly that public opinion in Scotland, as represented in this House, is as two to one against the Government; and I think if we could appeal to the Scotch people on the subject, we should find that the proportion would be not two to one, but four to one against these proposals. What harm, I ask, could be done to anyone outside Scotland if in this matter the Government adopted the same course as was taken on the Local Government Bill? We only ask that money which we ourselves have contributed should be devoted to such purposes as we ourselves prefer, we abhor—and I am sure the word is not too strong—we abhor and detest the idea of devoting money raised from the Scotch taxpayers to the compensation of publicans. I confess that something may be said in favour of the Government proposal with regard to England, because the fact that a majority of the English Representatives support the Government is some justification for their action in regard to England. A good deal has been said about Petitions from Scotland. I have only been able to find nine Scotch Petitions in favour of this measure, while there have been hundreds presented against it. In Glasgow, with a population of 500,000, to which, if you add the suburbs, which are as much a part of Glasgow as Westminster is a part of London, the number will be increased to 800,000, only 1,800 signatures could be obtained in favour of this Bill; and it has been pointed out by the Petitions Committee that a great many of the signatures appear to have been written in one hand. A great deal has been said in respect to the discretion exercised by the Magistrates in regard to the transfer and renewal of licences. I have been a Magistrate in Scotland for about 40 years, and have never known any difficulty arising from the action of the Magistrates in these matters. Whenever it has seemed desirable to reduce the number of public houses, we have done so without hesitation, and we have refused frequently the transfer of a licence from one owner to another, even when the transfer of the house has already taken place. And, notwithstanding all this, I have never heard any mention of a demand for compensation until recent times. If, however, this Bill should pass, I am confident that it will absolutely confer on all licensed holders in all cases the right to compensation. Even if not a legal right, you will confer a moral right that no Licensing Bench will set aside. Under these circumstances, I feel bound to oppose the clause.

*(8.1.) MR. SEYMOUR KEAY (Elgin and Nairn): Notwithstanding the observation of my hon. Friend the Member for Falkirk (Mr. W. P. Sinclair), that as the admission of these words would destroy the clause altogether he would not engage to vote for them, I am of opinion that the desirableness of destroying the clause is so great that it will be proper to vote for the Amendment. Hon. Members opposite who, having spoken this evening, have now left their places, twitted us with the way in which we are continuing the Debate. I think we on our side are quite justified in feeling amazement at the passionate way in which the Government are pressing forward this clause in the Bill. They are doing so not only against their political opponents, but against the wishes of their own supporters. We have indications that even Party ties are very severely strained under the present state of things. We have seen to-night, for example, that hon. Gentlemen opposite think nothing of leaving for Ascot unpaired, although the result has been a very narrow escape for their own Party. I believe there are many hon. Members on the other side of the House who are undesirous that their names should appear in the Division List in favour of the different clauses of this Bill, especially now that that which was a Compensation Bill has been turned into a Compensation by Closure Bill. The only Division which has not been effected by means of the Closure has been that of this evening. To-day the Papers circulated with the Votes were double the usual bulk, in consequence of their containing the list of Petitions received against the Bill. I find that the number of Petitions against compensation is 2,228, and that the signatures number 62,500, whilst the Petitions in favour of compensation number nine, and there are 2,700 signatures. The Unionist Press, hitherto the strongest supporters of the Government, are not with them with regard to the present Bill. The leading paper in my own constituency, namely, the *Elgin Courant and Courier*, which, during my election last October, strongly supported my Liberal Unionist opponent and opposed me, spoke a few days ago of the Compensation Clauses as "the sting in the Bill." How did the Government explain their persistency? We have been told that the publicans and the brewers have not been pressing them. The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) said before this Committee—

> "The Government has never received, either from the publicans or the brewers, the slightest hint that any proposals such as those brought forward by the Government, were desired by their trade."

The Government must admit that the country is not generally pressing them, but I observe that the recognised leading organ of the liquor trade, the *Morning Advertiser*, does not tell the same tale as the Government. In a leading article on the 19th of last month that newspaper, speaking of the Amendment placed on the Paper by the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord R. Churchill), said the acceptance of his Amendment—

> "Would be a distinct breach of faith with the trade who, on the understanding that the principles of the Licensing Bill would not be substantially altered, have refrained from offering opposition."

Of course, I do not for a moment allege that the President of the Local Government Board knowingly deceived the House, but he must remember there may have been communications passing of which he was not aware. There are very many Tory managers who know the Metropolis thoroughly, and they know full well that it was the publicans' influence that turned the scale in London in 1885 and gave five-sixths of the representation of the Metropolis to the Tory Party. The fact is, the present Government, for the first time perhaps in the history of this country, is endeavouring to turn this Parliamentary legislative machine into a huge electioneering agency. They depend upon three classes—the parsons, the landlords, and the publicans. They want the parsons to be canvassers for their Party, and so they bring in a Tithes Bill. They want the landlords to canvass for them, and they bring in a Land Purchase Bill. They want the publicans to canvass for them, and they bring in this present measure. There is no doubt this clause represents a desire to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. The framers of the Bill thought, no doubt with truth, that the great increase in the Drink Bill, as shown by the last Budget, would alarm the temperance people. They therefore determined to give them a sop by raising the tax on drink. The publicans, however, said "No; to increase the tax on liquor is to damage our profits." The Government replied, "We will not damage your profits, because, out of every 1s. we raise, we will put 4d. into your private pocket." "Done with you," says the publican; "we will agree to that, and we will offer no opposition to the raising of the tax on drink." I hope the Government will give the Committee some explanation as to whether there is any foundation for the statement that an understanding of this kind was arrived at. I want to know how it is the publicans have acquired such a power in the Councils of the Government. The cause, I think, is to be found in the enormous extension of the system of tied houses.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not see how that applies to this Amendment.

MR. SEYMOUR KEAY: Perhaps I should have explained my reason for bringing on this subject. I am going to show the magnitude of the income of the publican and the component parts of which it is made up, in order to prove that that income is the very last thing in the world which the nation should compensate out of the public taxes. We may suppose that a house costs £6,000 in the public house market. A publican, especially in London——

The CHAIRMAN: Obviously the hon. Member is still more out of order. He is arguing the question with reference to London. This clause applies to Scotland.

*MR. SEYMOUR KEAY: Well, I was not laying any stress upon that, but I am bound to say my figures relate to London. Am I in order in pointing out how the publican gets his political power by means of his income? It comes about in this way. A brewer lends him £4,500 and the man himself provides £1,500. The result is that the publican becomes absolutely dependent upon the value of his licence for every penny of the £1,500 provided by him out of his small private fortune. It is obvious that the mortgagee—the brewer—will not even get his £4,500 in the event of the extinction of the licence, while the entire £1,500 of the publican will be lost. The publican will, therefore, vote, of course, for the authority, who will tell him that he will get compensation and that his £1,500 will be saved. That is the reason I had for bringing in the question of the income of the publican. I would venture to call the attention of the Government to the fact that while they assert that their whole motive in this matter is the promotion of the cause of temperance—or, in other words, that they will not hesitate to do a thing which may be more or less detrimental to the drink traffic — the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) is much more candid. At Walsall a short time ago he used these words—

> "Up to now this great class"

—the publicans and brewers—

> "have successfully intimidated Governments and successfully intimidated Members of Parliament. In fact they have directly overthrown two Governments, and I do not blame the Government for being a little timid of meddling with them."

That, at all events, is a thoroughly honest statement of the case. As to the expenditure which must be eventually thrown on the country for the purchase of licences, my hon. Friend the Member for Barrow has computed the present marketable value of public houses at £250,000,000, and he has asserted that this sum will become much greater by the passage of this clause. I entirely agree with him, and am certain that the amount may be put at £300,000,000 by the time the Bill passes. The Chancellor of the Exchequer disputed these figures *in toto*, but the arguments he used against them were wonderfully weak. He read out a list of brewing firms whose shares he said had not risen in value since the month of April. But I am certain that the right hon. Gentleman as a political economist must know that that is an unsound argument. He must know that no one can hypothecate a single £5 note to the benefit of any particular industry or occupation without the reversionary value of that £5 note being felt, in raising the value of the property, if only by a single penny piece. All such adventitious aids in money matters are discounted as soon as money is placed at the disposal of the particular industry or occupation. There is better evidence than the figures which the right hon. Gentleman read out to show that brewery shares are not increasing in value. In *Breweries and Distilleries*, a paper which was quoted at the commencement of this Debate, it was stated on the 14th of this month—

> "Breweries are booming again just now, and last Saturday no fewer than four new issues were made."

Then they go on to say that a sum of some £900,000 which is being raised—

> "Will, no doubt, be used in increasing the number of tied houses, the advantage and wisdom of which has been seen in the enormous increase of trade for the last 12 months."

At the last meeting of the firm of Allsopps, the Committee of Investigation laid on the Table a Report, in which they said that—

> "The policy of tying houses should be continued and increased, and they recommended that money should be raised for that purpose."

The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, speaking on the English Clause, was at a loss to know how the setting aside of this money for the purpose of extinguishing licences could possibly have the effect of encouraging the consumption of drink. His words were very strong, indeed, on that subject. He said—

> "I deeply regret that the Government should be at issue with any people whom they desire to conciliate. Speaking honestly and sincerely, I cannot conceive on what ground and with what object the so-called Temperance Party are opposing the Government in so bitter and hostile a manner."

I think I can give the hon. Member some information in this matter. We think that the application of this money in the manner proposed will make the reduction of public houses so difficult as to be practically impossible, because it could only be done by fining the localities to be benefitted. In a town with 400 public houses, in all probability, if the people got the licensing into their own hands they would reduce the number to 300. That can and will very shortly be done without this Bill; but we say that the reduction which would be effected by the Bill would be only to 390 or 399. That is why we say the passing of the Bill will have no effect in decreasing the consumption of drink. I do not think the President of the Local Government Board can suppose that the publicans are not possessed of any desire for self preservation. Self immolation is at no time a pleasant thing, and the right hon. Gentleman will not expect it from any ordinary human being—not even from a publican. If it were otherwise, there would be no truth in the Persian proverb, with which my residence in the East has made me familiar, namely, that in a Council of Lions we do not expect an ordinance to be passed forbidding the having of lamb for breakfast. I wish to show why compensation is unjust and unnecessary, and for that purpose I want the Committee to inquire how the enormous value of £250,000,000 arises. There are three reasons, all of a strictly financial character, against compensation being considered a thing which could be justly given for the termination of this monopoly. In the first place, the whole value is created not by the operation of trade or industry, but by a sort of triple monopoly. There are three sets of unearned increment. The first is due to the fact that liquor is an enormously highly taxed and consequently high-priced article. If the Committee will take any very expensive articles, such as diamonds, they will see that the fact of an enormous money capital being required to deal in an article has in itself the effect of throwing the trade into the hands of capitalists pure and simple, and the consequence is that the limited class who conduct the trade are able to charge the public higher prices than they could otherwise do. Of course, the high price of liquor is further increased by the fact of a licence being required for a public house. And it is, again, still further increased by the monopoly of the tied houses. I may, perhaps, be allowed to illustrate my point by referring to another article which is also enormously taxed, and which becomes in consequence enormously valuable. I allude to salt in India——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I have endeavoured to follow the hon. Member's arguments and have failed to see their application. The illustration does not add to their clearness.

*MR. SEYMOUR KEAY: I will not pursue the argument, but perhaps I may be allowed to state the result. The result is that when we tax salt 2,000 per cent. we throw it into the hands of bankers and capitalists, and whilst they pay the revenue £7,000,000 a year in taxation it is proved by Official Returns that they mulct the people of India no less than £28,000,000 for the article they sell. I hold that the tax on spirits has exactly the same effect. The trade is thrown into the hands of capitalists, who by combining against the consumers are able to realise an immense percentage of profit annually. Between 30 and 40 years ago, when the tax on Scotch Whisky was only a third of what it is now, and the tax on Irish whisky only a fourth, there were none of these enormous values of public houses, and none of these enormous systems of tied houses, nor were such vast fortunes made by brewers and distillers. Things have now altered. The trade has been thrown into the hands of capitalists who are much more able to combine against the public than were their predecessors. The cost of good blended malt whisky at the distillery at this moment is only 3s. a gallon. Let me add, as an average over England, 1s. a gallon for carriage, and the tax of 10s. a gallon. This brings the cost up to 14s. a gallon. Unadulterated it could be sold at the present rate of 21s. a gallon, and produce a profit of 33 per cent. to the publican. This, therefore is the first unearned increment. It appears from a recent trial in Edinburgh that it is the custom of the trade to add water, so as to raise the 33 per cent. profit to 66 per cent. profit on every gallon of whisky sold. In other words, the actual practice of the liquor trade is that if a poor man pays 6d. for a certain adulterated mixture, 2¼d. of the 6d. goes to the Exchequer, and 3¼d. to the publican, in the form of profit, while the poor man only gets a halfpenny worth of whisky for his 6d. The same thing occurs with regard to beer. The public pays 2s. 8d. for a gallon of beer, which, with the tax included, costs only 10d. Perhaps gentlemen opposite may say the law could stop and prohibit all this adulteration. The law, however, is not enforceable, simply because the enormous gains realised by this fraud are such a temptation to the publican as to make him defy all the penalties which the law can place upon him. Under these circumstances, it is not in the least wonderful that the market price of public houses should have gone up to the enormous figure of £250,000,000 or £300,000,000. But it is monstrous that when this is the state of facts, we should be asked to allow the publican to capitalise his enormous and, in many respects, illicit gains, and then go to the Public Treasury and take away at one haul the whole of the capitalised value of the gigantic yearly income out of which he has been able thus to cheat the public I say that the large profits realised by public houses constitute of themselves the compensation for which the publican willingly runs the undoubtedly considerable risk of having his licence withdrawn. I can further illustrate this point by mentioning a monopoly within a monopoly existing in the drink trade. Messrs. Spiers and Pond have a very lucrative monopoly within a monopoly. They have the monopoly of selling drink at certain railway stations, and they take advantage of it to charge the public double the price, in many cases, for which they can get the same thing at the public house next door. If anyone here has ever gone into one of their bars on the Underground Railway, and asked for a glass of sherry he will have noticed that he has had to pay double the usual price, or else he gets a glass half the usual size. I want to ask the Government whether, if the Railway Company put a stop to this monopoly, Messrs. Spiers and Pond would be entitled to demand from the company the capitalised value of their business?

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! That has no bearing whatever on the question.

*MR. SEYMOUR KEAY: I will not pursue the subject further. In fact, my illustration was at an end. My general point is that the income derived from this monopoly, whether the monopoly be terminable in one year or five, is in itself the compensation which the monopolist expects, and that he is not entitled to ask for the capitalised value of that income if his monopoly be withdrawn. (8.49.)

(9.20.) MR. M'LAGAN (Linlithgow): I am quite willing to allow the Government the credit of an honest attempt on behalf of temperance, by reducing the amount of drunkenness, but we want an actual reduction in the number of licensed houses, and the plan of the Government will simply check the reduction which is now going on. True, increase in the price of alcoholic liquors reduces consumption, and this reduction has followed increase in duty; but then, again, consumption follows the rise and fall of wages. We want, I say, a reduction in the number of public houses, and I maintain we are able to accomplish this more rapidly by the present system in Scotland than we shall be able to do under the method contemplated by the Government. In the first place, the amount placed at the disposal of County Councils is inadequate for the purchase of many houses, and many years must elapse before any sensible reduction can be effected by this means. Then, as you reduce the number of houses you will increase the reluctance of the remaining proprietors to give up their trade, and the compensation demanded will rise as houses are diminished in number, the funds of the County Councils becoming in proportion more inadequate. Call it compensation or purchase the thing is the same, public money passes into the hands of licence holders. An hon. Baronet opposite has assured the Committee that he would vote against compensation, but he supports the Bill; but he must admit that with the passing of the Bill publicans will have a higher vantage ground, and will appeal to Parliamentary recognition of the value of their licences as an addition to their claim for compensation. It is far from my wish to act unjustly toward licence holders; but I bear in mind the fact that licences are not permanently granted, and each year the holder of the privilege or monopoly makes a large profit over the expenses of his business within that period. I do not think there is much sympathy to be excited for those who, in the public welfare, are required to give up a licence to which they have no special claim. With the growth of temperance opinions in this city and elsewhere we see a large increase in the number of coffee houses, a trade in which profits are large, and a licence holder, being deprived of his licence, can carry on the business of a refreshment house with profit to himself and advantage to his customers. I object to the proposals in the Bill for several reasons. They will perpetuate the system of licensed houses in the country which, by the voice of the people, is being gradually done away with. In the train of evils following the public house system are poverty, crime, and consequent increase in rates. I could mention places in Scotland where the withdrawal of licences has led directly to the fall of police and poor rates. I object to the Bill as an obstacle to the progress of the temperance movement. Public opinion in Scotland is far in advance of public opinion in England on this subject. My hon. Friend the Member for Stirlingshire (Mr. Bolton) has shown this, and I need not go over the same ground. There is no doubt of the fact, and if you want to put down public houses, you have only to put power into the hands of the people and they will make short work of it. A *plébiscite* has been taken in a hundred towns and villages in Scotland, and the result has been an expression of opinion in the population of 12 to 1 in favour of putting down licensed public houses and giving the authority for this to the people themselves. The Bill is an obstacle and a difficulty in the path the people desire to pursue; it maintains a system disastrous to the country and ruinous in its tendencies. When we come to the next Amendment we shall prove that there are other objects to which we can more usefully apply the funds at our disposal. I intend to do everything in my power to oppose this Bill, and I believe that since the passing of the Reform Bill there has not been so much excitement in Scotland against any measure as exists against this Bill.

(9.30.) MR. J. WILSON (Govan): I very much sympathise with what has been said by my hon. Friend the Member for Linlithgowshire. No one who listened to the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he brought in his Budget would have supposed that the right hon. Gentleman had anything else than a pious horror at the amount of the evil entailed on the country by the enormous amount of money placed at his disposal through the drink traffic, and that the difficulty was how to get rid of the evils of intemperance. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, in one of his speeches, said he was surprised at the opposition of the Temperance Party to these proposals of the Government to reduce the number of licences. Why, Sir, the Temperance Party have been resisting and protesting in almost every Licensing Court throughout the country, for half a century, against any increase in the number of licences. We cannot blame the Temperance Party for having no sympathy with the Government on this occasion, because this Bill is seeking to give the trade a vested interest by a process of compensation for licences which it was never held to be entitled to in the past. We do not object to anything in the Bill except the compensation clauses. We should welcome the Bill if the Government could see fit to alter, so far as Scotland is concerned, the destination of the money intended to be applied to the buying up of licences. A few evenings ago the President of the Local Government Board spoke of the floor of the House being inundated with Petitions and telegrams against the Bill. He said that the telegrams all came from the same source. They do, and the source is the Temperance Party in Scotland, and if the Government persist in pressing their proposals they will have to reckon with no mean power so far as the Scotch constituencies are concerned. A right hon. Gentleman spoke to-night of the strong feeling in Scotland on this matter. The feeling in Scotland is much stronger than in England, and my right hon. Friend desired to know how it was that the people of Scotland were so much against the Government proposals. Now, Sir, as a temperance reformer of many years' experience, I may say that the public feeling and sentiments in Scotland is largely due to the efforts of the United Temperance Party in the country. We hear hon. Members opposite speaking of the Petitions sent to them in favour of this Bill, and the President of the Board of Trade has, on more than one occasion, referred to the letters he has had, but I will undertake to say that, so far as Scotland is concerned, the Petitions received by Scotch Members have been overwhelmingly against the proposals of the Government, and as to mass meetings, I think that after what has been said by my right hon. Friend with reference to the meeting at Bridgeton, little need be added. On a recent occasion the publicans made an attempt to hold an open-air meeting in Glasgow, and at that meeting an Amendment was proposed by the Temperance Party, and carried over the heads of those who had convened the gathering. I think it is a fact that in no Parliament have so many Petitions from so many interests throughout the country been presented against any Bill as there have been against this. In a speech which he delivered to-night, the hon. Member for the Ayr Burghs said he felt sure that if the opinion of the people of Scotland could be ascertained, and if an election took place, there would be returned to this House a large majority of Members in favour of the proposals of the Government. I do not think that Members on this side of the House would shrink from such a test; indeed, they would deem the battle-ground well chosen. Whatever might be the result in Ayr Burghs, I believe that throughout the length and breadth of Scotland there would be such a unanimous expression of opinion as would startle the right hon. Gentleman who is in charge of this Bill. The hon. Member, in speaking of a meeting of the Temperance Party that was held in Ayr, cited a statement by one of the members of the Scotch Temperance League, and stated that that body had stultified itself in reference to the question of petitioning against this measure by having returned a right hon. Member to Parliament as their Member. But at a large meeting held in Ayr, last week—called by the two Political Parties, so far as the temperance community is concerned, and held in the largest hall in the town—the rev. Mr. Duncan, an Established Church minister, proposed a resolution to the effect that the meeting protested against the proposals of the Government in the Local Taxation (Duties) Bill for extinguishing existing licences by purchase, as that proposal would practically create a vested interest in licences to which no claim could be established either in law or in equity. In the course of his speech, the mover of that resolution said he was a supporter of the Government at the last election in the Burghs; but if another election occurred upon these proposals he would unhesitatingly vote against them. The motion was seconded by one of the Town Councillors in Ayr, and was supported by Mr. Johnston, a Liberal Unionist, who said—

> "He had been a supporter of the present Government, and felt it was unfair, after having helped the Government to their present position, that they should use their power and their majority for this purpose and saddle remorselessly this injustice on the country. Lord Hartington, whom he regarded as his leader, knew now, that if the measure were forced through the House, as the Government proposed to force it, it would cause a great strain on their allegiance, and as a temperance reformer and a minister of the Gospel he should feel it his duty to use all his power to turn out the Government."

Now this occurred at a large public meeting in Ayr. The other day we had in the Lobby of the House the Lord Provost of Glasgow, and I presume that his appearance was indicative of his having come to warn the Government against persisting with this measure. The Lord Provost of Glasgow is a Liberal Unionist, and I understand that at the present moment there is a motion before the Town Council of Glasgow protesting against this measure. We have seen from the public prints that many of the Municipal Authorities throughout Scotland have been protesting against these proposals, and how the Government can, in the face of this opposition, persist in going on with them I really cannot understand. We are told that these proposals of the Government will not interfere with the Licensing Authorities—that they will not interfere with the powers at present possessed by the Justices of the Peace in counties and Magistrates in burghs. We know that at the present time every new licence that is granted is understood to be granted in the public interest and the public good, and that Magistrates when they find a licence has been granted, and that it has not turned out for the public good, have had the power—and have exercised it, too—of refusing a renewal at the next Licensing Session. As a Justice of the Peace, I myself have had no hesitation in withdrawing licences when I have come to the conclusion that they are not required in the public interest. I would remind the House that Scotland in the past has been exceptionally treated in this matter of licences. The hours during which houses have been allowed to be open have been shortened; Sunday opening has been stopped; and I venture to think that if the Government, instead of bringing in this Bill, had proposed one to further shorten the hours of trading, they would have materially reduced the consumption of liquor, and have benefited immensely the moral tone of great masses of the people. Every one knows it is the last two or three hours of the night in which most drunkenness occurs.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I think the hon. Member is wandering from the subject of the Amendment.

Mr. J. WILSON: I was bringing to the recollection of the Committee the fact that in the year 1853, when a Conservative Government was in power—and I think this is particularly germane to the subject I have in hand—in the month of August in that year, Parliament resolved, by Act of Parliament, to prohibit Justices of the Peace in counties and Magistrates in burghs from granting licences to blacksmiths, taxmen, and tollkeepers all over the country of Scotland. We know that up to that time these people had been licensed, but in 1853 these licences were abolished, and without a farthing being paid as compensation. Hundreds of these licences were taken away. This precedent goes a long way in support of our contention that there is no vested interest in licences. I feel satisfied that if this matter is decided by the majority of the Members from Scotland, instead of money being given to the publicans it will be devoted to much better and much higher purposes—the purpose of educating the youth of the nation, both in elementary and in higher schools, and if it were so devoted, it would prove a blessing to the country; and it would be much better than giving it away to people who have already enriched themselves at the public expense, and at the expense of the demoralisation of the community.

(9.50.) Mr. DUFF (Banffshire): I think we have reasonably complained that, so far, we have had no indication from the Treasury Bench of what they intend to do in regard to this Amendment, although the Debate has been going on for three-and-a-half hours.

*Mr. RITCHIE: I understand that the Amendment is to be withdrawn.

Mr. DUFF: I have no information to that effect. I think my hon. Friend is perfectly prepared to go on with it, and I certainly am prepared to support it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The present Amendment, if carried, will preclude the possibility of dealing with all subsequent Amendments appropriating the money.

Mr. DUFF: I was not aware that this Amendment before the Committee, which involves very important questions, would have that effect.

*Mr. RITCHIE: I am sure the hon. Gentleman would not wish to misrepresent the action of the Government in this matter. I understood that, in consequence of the ruling of the Chair, as to the effect which the carrying of the Amendment would have, an intimation had been received by the Solicitor General that an appeal would be made to the Mover to withdraw it, so that discussion might more properly take place upon the section to which the arguments of hon. Members most properly apply.

(9.52.) Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling, &c.): Perhaps I may be allowed to say that, although I have had no intimation of that sort, still a good many of us are of opinion that this Debate, although it has been a forcible expression of opinion, is going somewhat upon a side issue. The Amendment of my hon. Friend has been moved with a view to his recommending to the Committee, at a subsequent stage, certain modes of disposing of this money. I am not sure that in the prominence which he gave to these particular modes I should altogether agree with him, and I think that some of my hon. Friends are in the same position; but after the ruling which you have given from the Chair to the effect that this Amendment, if carried, will involve the abandonment of the whole of the scheme of the Government, including the proposal that a certain amount of money should be allotted to the superannuation of the police, I think that the question becomes complicated to such an extent that it perhaps would be better, as the right hon. Gentleman has suggested, if this Amendment were withdrawn. I hope that my hon. Friend will agree to adopt that course in order that we may raise this point of the buying up of licences at a different part of the clause, where it can be more effectively discussed. I may say frankly that the object of the Scotch Members with whose views I am acquainted is to bring prominently before the House the objections to the buying up of licences, and to explain to the House the glaring contrast between the purpose to which it is now proposed to devote this money, and the purposes to which it might reasonably be applied. I have a considerable amount of sympathy with my hon. Friend, who is anxious to obtain some of the money for the especial purpose of creating harbours. I can quite understand his being anxious to do that; and I think we shall simplify the position if he allows this Amendment to be withdrawn, in order that we may by-and-by be able to place before the House the alternatives which we propose for the distribution of the money.

(9.55.) **Mr. S. WILLIAMSON**: My object in moving this Amendment was to strengthen the opposition to the proposals of the Government by showing that there were great national purposes besides police superannuation, and besides the payment of school fees, to which this money might reasonably be applied, and, in bringing so prominently before the House the question of Fishery Harbours, I think I was able to show a good purpose to which this money might be applied, and I was able especially to point out the claims of the fishing industry. Now, Sir, after your ruling, which I did not hear, but the purport of which has been communicated to me, I, of course, will withdraw the Amendment. I still think, however, that if the Amendment had been carried, progress might have been reported, and we might have come to some arrangement for the distribution of this money, giving, say, £60,000 for education, £30,000 for fishing harbours, and £40,000 for police superannuation. I beg to ask leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

(9.5.) **Mr. HUNTER** (Aberdeen, N.): The first sub-section of the clause provides that the sum of £40,000 shall be applied to the purposes of police superannuation in Scotland, and I beg to move that these words be omitted. I do it for the purpose of endeavouring to ascertain from the Government what it is they really mean, because Scotland, in regard to police superannuation, differs altogether from England. In England there has been, by Act of Parliament, a system of police superannuation provided for all boroughs and counties, and it has been in operation for a great many years. But in Scotland we stand in this position, that there are no superannuation funds in Scotland, except in two or three small localities. While, therefore, in the case of England, the Government propose the application of this money to a known purpose they are, in the case of Scotland, asking the Committee to agree to the application of the large sum of £40,000 a year to a purpose which, at the present moment, is entirely unknown. It has been stated that the Government are preparing a Bill dealing with the question of superannuation, but that Bill has not been brought before the House, and, therefore, in this matter we are in the extraordinary position that we are asked to vote out of this sum of £120,000, no less than £40,000 a year for a purpose the exact nature and details of which are entirely unknown to the House and to the Committee. Certainly the Committee ought not to agree to passing this clause until we have had some distinct information from the Government as to the nature of the purpose to which it is to be applied. I make those observations in no spirit of hostility to the object which the Government have in view, namely, the establishment of a Superannuation Fund for the police in Scotland. I, for one, should be disposed to give a satisfactory scheme favourable and kindly consideration. But the difficulty we are now in is that we are asked to vote this money without knowing in any way whatever the scheme which the Government propose. Therefore, although favourable to the purpose of the superannuation of the police, we do not know how that purpose will be carried out or whether it will meet with the approval of the people of Scotland, or of the police, or of the Members of this House. It seems to me absolutely necessary at this stage that we should be in possession of the views of the Government. I look upon the superannuation of the police only as part of a larger scheme of superannuation, under which, by means of insurance, aged working men would be superannuated, and not merely policemen. If it had been possible for a private Member to have brought this larger question before the House. I should have done so, but the time of private Members has now been taken away. I hope, if the Ballot is favourable next year, to bring before the House a scheme of insurance by which all men in Scotland, and not policemen alone, may be able to provide for old age. I think the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Scotland ought to inform the House what is the scheme of police superannuation which the Government propose.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 5, to leave out Sub section (i).—(*Mr. Hunter.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (i.) stand part of the Clause."

*(10.5.) THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. M. T. STORMONTH DARLING, Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The hon. and learned Member has stated his views temperately. He is quite right in saying that in Scotland there is no scheme of police superannuation. The boroughs and counties have power to provide for the infirmities of aged policemen by payment of a lump sum in proportion to the pay. But there is no scheme of superannuation except in the Borough of Greenock under a Local Act. In Scotland, I believe, there is as great need of police superannuation as in England. Apart from considerations of justice, the figures which are before me certainly show that many of the police in Scotland are beyond the age when they can efficiently discharge their duty. I have no doubt there is a natural disinclination on the part of the authorities to dismiss men who have done their duty. With regard to the very reasonable demand of the hon. Member that the Committee should know something of the Bill before they proceed to the details, I have simply this to say. If the hon. and learned Member withdraws his Amendment we shall simply affirm the principle of police superannuation, and the dedication of a certain sum to that purpose. With regard to the mode in which it is to be carried out, before we reach Clause 4, which deals with the matter somewhat in detail, I think I can safely promise that the Scotch Bill will be in the possession of hon. Members. It will be substantially on the lines of the English Bill. These are intimations which I hope will be satisfactory to the hon. Member, and that he will allow this clause to pass without further comment.

(10.8.) MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: With all due respect to the hon. and learned Gentleman, I cannot regard either the substance or form of his answer as satisfactory. Where is the Lord Advocate? I mean no disrespect to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General, who fulfils his duties in a manner which does him credit. But the Lord Advocate is responsible for Scotch business. The Secretary for Scotland is the chief officer connected with the business of Scotland, but he is in another House and we never see him. The Lord Advocate in this House represents Scotch business in this House with a fulness and power which the hon. and learned Gentleman cannot profess to possess. Here is the Scotch clause of the most contentious Bill of the whole Session, and the Lord Advocate is absent. I have reason to believe he is not ill. Had he been I should not have said anything. But I understand he is otherwise occupied. I do not think it is treating Scotch Memders with any very high degree of respect. [*Laughter.*] The ex-Lord Mayor (Sir R. N. Fowler) laughs at that statement. I can assure him it is earnestly felt by Scotch Members. The Lord Advocate ought to have been here. Besides the Lord Advocate, there ought to have been the Bill. This Bill was read a first time on the last day of April. It ought to have been at the other end of the month—on the 1st of April—as a day more appropriate to this measure. Yet here we are in June without the Bill which is to carry out this clause. As to what the hon. Member for Aberdeen said, I confess myself not altogether enamoured of universal superannuation, nor am I enamoured of the extension of the superannuation of the police. We have a system of superannuation in the Police Service of this country, and I confess frankly I do not like it. I should rather like to see it stinted and restrained than developed. Like the rest of the Scotch Members, I think we are entitled to see the Bill before proceeding with this clause.

*(10.13.) MR. RITCHIE: I am not surprised that it should have been expected that the Lord Advocate would be present, but I may explain that he had an engagement of the very highest and most urgent importance. He was prepared to throw it over, and remain in the House, but his Colleagues did not wish him to do so in view of the exceptional importance of his engagement. If there be any blame, it should attach, not to the Lord Advocate, but to his Colleagues who advised him. Looking to the fact that the main question of police superannuation would be discussed on a subsequent clause, when the Superannuation Bill would be in the hands of the Committee, his Colleagues thought they were hardly justified in asking him to forego that engagement. Therefore, if there is any blame, it is due not to the Lord Advocate, but rather to his Colleagues. Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman asks why the Scotch Superannuation Bill has not been produced, and that Bill is the *gravamen* of the objection now made. He says the Bill was ordered to be printed on the 30th of April, and, after indulging in a little pleasantry as to the 1st of April, to which the right hon. Gentleman is quite welcome, he wanted to know why so long an interval had been allowed to elapse without the production of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman must understand that if only the Scotch Bill has had to be presented no difficulty would have arisen in that way, but it has had to be considered in connection with the English Bill, and a large number of intricate and difficult points have had to be decided in that connection. In the case of the English Bill the Committee have been content with the intimation of the Government that the Superannuation Bill would be in the hands of Members before the discussion on the particular clause of the main Bill dealing with the application of the money to police superannuation came on; and before the Committee embarked on the discussion of the particular clause dealing with this question in relation to Scotland, the Scotch Superannuation Bill will be in the hands of hon. Members. I hope the right hon. Gentleman, after having made his protest, will accept my reasons for the non-production of the Bill, and my assurance that before the particular clause comes on for discussion the Bill will be in the hands of hon. Members. Its proposals will be found to be closely analogous to those of the English Bill.

(10.20.) SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): We now know how we stand in regard to the representation of Scotland, and why it is the Government are anxious to postpone this clause. They suggested that it should be postponed, and now we have it before us we find that the Scotch Department is not represented by the Minister who is chiefly responsible to this House for the administration of Scotch affairs. We have often complained of the way in which, under the present system, that Department is represented. There is a Secretary for Scotland, who is chiefly responsible for Scotch administration, whom we never see at all, and who, I believe, is at the present moment cruising about the North of Ireland, but even were he in London we should not be able to see him, as he is not a member of this Assembly. But we have in this House the Lord Advocate, who represents the Chief Secretary, but although he is an officer in receipt of a high salary we do not find him here. He is said not to be to blame because his Colleagues have supported him in his absence; still we have the fact that he will not forego his private functions for those he ought to perform in this House. Under such circumstances we ought not to be called upon to deal with this question, while the absence of the Scotch Superannuation Bill is a further reason for not dealing with this matter. For my part, I believe there ought to be some system of superannuation for Government servants, because they have peculiar duties to perform, and there are many reasons why they should have consideration, but it is not only the principle of superannuation with which we have to deal; we are called upon to vote a distinct sum. Now, I ask, can we judge whether that sum is right or wrong unless we know what the scheme of superannuation is? In England there is in most counties and boroughs a superannuation system, but in Scotland no such system has been adopted. At present, we have not the least idea of what is to be the system on which we are asked to vote a grant of money, and under these circumstances I beg to move, Sir, that you report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Sir G. Campbell.*)

(10.25.) *MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.): I desire strongly to support the Motion of my hon. Friend. I admit that there is a strong case for police superannuation, and for 20 years I have supported that proposal, on account of the exceptional duties the police are called on to perform, through a large portion of their lives. But, although supporting this view, I admit there is great diversity of opinion in Scotland on this subject. No case has been made out for calling on us to give a blank cheque for police superannuation. We ought to have the Bill before us. I desire particularly to direct attention to the humiliating position in which Scotland is constantly being placed. It is not enough that we have no one here sufficiently representing Scotland. It is not enough that we should take at second hand from the Lord Advocate the opinions of the Chief Secretary, but we are told to-night for the first time that so little do the Government consider the interests of Scotland that they have assured the Lord Advocate he may leave the House at a time when important Scotch business is about to be considered.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is now going into matter which is very wide of the question before the Committee.

MR. ESSLEMONT: I do not desire to do that. I am only endeavouring to show that because the Lord Advocate is not here, and we have no Bill dealing with this question, we are not in a position to discuss it at the present moment. I desire to show that the position in which Scotland is placed is the reason why Progress should be reported, so that the Lord Advocate may be able to be in his place when the matter is discussed. The Lord Advocate is the only Minister entitled to speak for Scotland. ["No, no."] Let those who say "No, no," tell me who is entitled to speak for Scotland?

AN hon. MEMBER: The Solicitor General.

MR. ESSLEMONT: The Solicitor General for Scotland has already said he is not in a position to speak.

*MR. M. T. STORMONTH DARLING: I beg pardon; I said nothing of the kind.

MR. ESSLEMONT: I should be very sorry to misinterpret the hon. Gentleman, who, if anything, is always most conciliatory and courteous, but he has told the Committee that the Bill is not ready, and that the lines on which it is to be drawn are not settled.

*(10.28.) MR. M. T. STORMONTH DARLING: The hon. Member, most unintentionally no doubt, entirely misrepresents me. I did not say that the lines of the Bill were not settled, nor did I say that I did not fully represent the Scotch Department in the absence of the Lord Advocate. The lines of the Bill are settled, and it will be published very shortly, and in what I have said I have spoken with the authority of the Government.

MR. ESSLEMONT: I am exceedingly glad that the interruption has brought about so important a statement. Now we know where we are. We know that the Lord Advocate has delegated his duties, and that the Secretary for Scotland has also delegated his duties to the Solicitor General for Scotland, and that he knows exactly the lines on which the Scotch Bill for the superannuation of the police is being drawn, and yet he asks us to give a blank cheque on the faith of the Bill being entirely satisfactory to the Scotch Members—to grant this sum of £40,000 for police superannuation without knowing one of the provisions of the Bill, or the lines on which it is being drawn. The statement of the Solicitor General furnishes a sufficient reason why this clause should be postponed, and why we should not be called on to discuss it till we have the details of the Bill before us.

(10.30.) SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I cannot understand on what ground this Motion is resisted. This will be an admirable opportunity for the few Scotch Members who sit on the other side to show by their vote that they think Scotch business can be very well conducted in this House without the presence of the right hon. Gentleman who represents the interests of Scotland in the Government. We have heard a great deal about Home Rule for Scotland, and, if there ever was a reason for it, it is to be found in the contempt with which the interests of Scotland are to-night treated by the Government. They knew that Scotch business was coming on, and the absence of the Lord Advocate at such a time is a thing for which no excuse whatever can be made. I knew something in the old days about the management of Scotch business in this House. The executive officer in the person of the Secretary for Scotland, or the Lord Advocate, is the official to represent the interests of Scotland, and to inform Members for Scotland of the policy of the Government with regard to Scotland, and the notion of relegating a duty of that kind to the Solicitor General for Scotland is a thing I never heard of. I am delighted to see that the Tory Scotch Members are going to vote for that mode of conducting Scotch business, for, they may depend upon it, the incident will not be overlooked or forgotten in Scotland. The people of Scotland have already had some indications that their business is neglected and not treated with the attention it deserves and demands, and now we have a Scotch clause before us—a clause dealing directly with the interests of Scotland, under many heads, such as education, police, and licensing—and we have the Government bent on forcing the clause through in the absence of the Lord Advocate. I have no doubt the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury will undertake to explain these Scotch subjects as affected by the Bill. We shall be very happy to hear what he has to say, as we are informed that the whole principle of police superannuation in Scotland has been settled. I trust the right hon. Gentleman will get up and state what those principles are. The Scotch Members will hear that announcement with great interest and satisfaction; but, in the meantime, we protest against this method of treating Scotch business and Scotch Members. I venture to say it is a thing which Scotland has a right to resent, and the Government may depend upon it that Scotland will resent it. The Scotch people have demanded, and they will continue to demand, a much fuller control of the affairs of their own country, especially when they have before them the conduct of the Government to-night.

*(10.35.) MR. W. H. SMITH: The right hon. Gentleman has challenged me to explain the principles of Scotch Police Superannuation. I would reply that the principles on which the Scotch Superannuation Bill are framed are to be found in the Bills for which the right hon. Gentleman opposite was responsible in 1883-4-5, allowance being made for application to Scotland. The Scotch Superannuation Bill is in course of preparation, and is only slightly different from the English Bill. The principle of superannuation is the same in both countries. The right hon. Gentleman has referred in strong language to the absence of the Lord Advocate. My right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board has stated why the Lord Advocate is absent. ["No, no."] Yes, I think he has. I take the full and entire responsibility for the Lord Advocate's absence.

SIR G. TREVELYAN: What is the cause?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: There are occasions when hon. and learned Gentlemen opposite are not in their places; and although I admit it is the duty of Members of the Government to be present whenever the circumstances of the case require it, there are occasions which are of importance to their position as members of the Bar when their absence is excusable. There are Members of the House who are aware of the sacrifices which a Lord Advocate has to make in order to be present in the House; and I am sure I am speaking to hon. Gentlemen who are not without sympathy for the ability of the Lord Advocate in this House, and will not desire to comment harshly upon a temporary absence. The Government are represented by the Solicitor General for Scotland, and what we ask for now is merely an admission of the principle of superannuation in Scotland. It will be remembered that the principle of superannuation was recognised as regards England before the English Bill was in the hands of hon. Members. Surely the Committee do not desire to negative the principle of superannuation for the Scotch police? The Bill to give effect to that principle will have to be considered on Second Reading, in Committee, and in the House; and hon. Members can then deal with its details. The question the Committee are now considering is whether we shall not accept the principle of superannuation for the police of Scotland as well as for England.

(10.40.) SIR G. TREVELYAN: The right hon. Gentleman the leader of the House appealed to me as being in some manner bound to extend a special indulgence to the Lord Advocate. Well, I will tell him how I look on it. There was a time—three or four years ago—when the Secretary for Scotland sat in this House. I was present during the discussion on the Crofters Bill, which was a measure (dealing as it did with several counties) quite as important as the question of the superannuation of the police, and at the side of the Secretary for Scotland were both the Lord Advocate and the Solicitor General for Scotland, who acted as his advisers. Now the Secretary for Scotland is in the other House, and the Lord Advocate is more than an adviser—he is virtually the Administrator of Scotland. The Lord Advocate gets a magnificent salary, and the idea that gentlemen of the Long Robe are justified in postponing public to private interests is one I do not share. Any gentleman of the Long Robe who has public duties to perform, and at the same time private interests to serve, should make those public duties and private interests coincide with some propriety. This is the first piece of important, practical Scotch business of the Session, and the First Lord not only asks the Committee to accept the absence of the Lord Advocate, but to pass in an hour without any discussion on the merits what is, in fact, the Second Reading of a most important Bill. What is the state of police superannuation in Scotland? I do not happen to have before me the Return issued the other day, but I know the essence of it very well, and I know there is only one burgh in Scotland where there is a regular system of police superannuation —namely, Greenock, and the 17 policemen superannuated there are practically the whole of the superannuated police in Scotland. Besides this a few allowances are given by the Town Council of Glasgow. Superannuation does not exist, practically speaking, in Scotland at this moment. I do not say whether it is right or wrong; but I do say that to set up a system of superannuation in Scotland is equivalent to passing the Second Reading of a most important Bill, and that Bill is not before the Committee. We are told by the First Lord of the Treasury that we are to gather what is proposed for Scotland from Bills which were introduced, but which did not pass, years ago—when half the hon. Gentlemen who are now in Parliament were not Members of this House. That is impossible. It is too great a task to put upon any Parliament which is of human birth. What would the First Lord of the Treasury say if the First Lord of the Admiralty were in the House of Lords, and the Secretary to the Admiralty were absent, and the most important Naval Estimates had to be moved by the Civil Lord?

(10.44.) MR. A. ELLIOT (Roxburgh): I doubt very much whether the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, and the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken, were quite serious in the reasons they gave in asking for a postponement. They seem to think it palatable to Scotchmen that they should rebuke the Lord Advocate and insult the Scotch Solicitor General who takes his place and endeavours to discharge the duty of representing Scotland in his absence. This pretence on the part of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen is most patent. If they simply wish to cause delay let them get up and say so. That pretence is really too absurd. It is incumbent on the right hon. Member for Bridgeton to show, what he has entirely failed in showing, that if the Lord Advocate had been present he could have given one single reason or advanced any argument which it is not in the power of the Solicitor General to do. We all know that the Lord Advocate is not only an able man, but that he attends strictly to his duties and works hard at his business. It is the merest nonsense to suggest that the Committee are not in a position to proceed with this clause. I resent the pretensions of Members who make occasional visits to Scotland for electioneering purposes that they know anything about the sentiments of the great masses of the Scottish people. Above all things the Scottish people like their business to be done well and effectually. If the Committee are going to reject the scheme let them do so; but do not let them make a pretence, which no one believes to be genuine, that the Committee is not competent to deal with the matter.

(10.50.) DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): The Scotch Members have the reputation of being a practical set of men, and I wonder it did not occur to some of them to take note of the statement of the Solicitor General for Scotland that we should look at the provisions of the English Bill as an indication of the intentions of the Government as to superannuation. I procured a copy of the Bill to see what enlightenment it would afford, and here I would say that the hon. Member who has just sat down, and who spoke with an eloquence which drew forth the cheers of the Ministerialists, did not seem to know what he was talking about. He accuses us of obstructing the business of Parliament on what he calls a mere "pretence." But what is the plea on which we are recommending that this particular business should be postponed? I venture to say that if hon. Members will listen to what it is, they will no longer be inclined to cheer such observations as those which fell from the hon. Member. The hon. Member for Aberdeen has pointed out that practically there is no superannuation in Scotland. We have come to a sub-section of Clause 2, by which £40,000 is to be applied for the purpose of police superannuation in Scotland. It is pointed out by the Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) that there is no system of police superannuation in Scotland, while in England there is. The Scottish Members wish for an explanation as to the scheme which is proposed. Turning to Clause 4, I find there an argument against the proposals of the Government, for while it is proposed that £150,000 shall be granted for the superannuation of the police of London——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman must not enter into the question of the merits of the proposal. The Question before the Committee is that of reporting Progress.

DR. CAMERON: I am merely pointing out that while £150,000 is proposed to be granted for the superannuation of the police of London, only £40,000 is to be granted for the purpose in Scotland—the population being about equal. That is a point which I think justifies us in demanding an explanation. What explanation have we had?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman must not examine the merits of the proposal. The Question before the House is one of reporting progress.

DR. CAMERON: We know nothing about the merits of the scheme, and that is what we want to know. The President of the Local Government Board has referred us to the English Bill. I have got a copy, and I will read two clauses to show—[*Cries of* "Order!"]

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is again examining the merits. It is quite irregular. I must again ask him to address himself to the Question of reporting Progress.

DR. CAMERON: I would submit that the unsatisfactory replies we have received are the best possible reason why we should report Progress. I am in favour of the principle of superannuation; but, as far as I understand, the proposals of the English Bill are absolutely impossible of application to Scotland. The Lord Advocate, if he had been present, might have told us something. The

Solicitor General knows nothing about the matter.

(10.56.) MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): I shall certainly support the Motion to report progress, and I am sure it will be supported by a vast majority of the Scottish Members. They have not before them, as they have a right to have, the measure dealing with the superannuation to which this sub-section applies; and, again, they have not in his place the Officer of the Government who could have given them information—the Lord Advocate. The Government cannot pretend that they have not had fair notice. [*Ministerial cries of* "Divide."] I am perfectly determined to have my say out. The inarticulate groaning of the hon. Member for Dumbartonshire (Sir A. Orr-Ewing) will have no influence upon me. The Government had fair notice that Scotch Members desired to see the Bill before dealing with this clause, and, while various reasons have been given for the non-introduction of the Bill, the Solicitor General for Scotland is unable to tell us anything about it. Certainly, the delay in the production of the Bill is not due to overwork in the Scotch office. But it is worthy of comment among Scottish Members, that when it is important that a Bill of this sort should be produced at an early date it is continually promised but never produced. I think we should enter a protest against a mode of proceeding which has been adopted on several occasions—making one measure depend on the production of another. That occurred in the case of the Inland Revenue Bill and in the case of the Contagious Diseases (Pleuro-Pneumonia) Bill. Then we have the clauses of this Bill, which are dependent upon the clauses of another Bill which is not introduced. I think the House of Commons is bound—[*Interruption*]—I think the House of Commons is bound—[*Interruption*]—I think the House of Commons is bound—[*Interruption*]—to show its independence by refusing to proceed further at present with this Bill. This is the first occasion during the present Session that Government business dealing with Scotland has been before the House, and yet upon this occasion the Lord Advocate for Scotland, the Member of the Ministry who is responsible for Scotch Government business, is not present. I do not think my hon. Friend the Member for Roxburghshire (Mr. A. Elliot) was altogether happy in his defence of the Lord Advocate's absence. [*Interruption.*]

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh N.): Mr. Courtney, I wish to draw your attention to a very serious matter, namely, the continual interruption indulged in by hon. Members opposite.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Buchanan.

MR. BUCHANAN: I am perfectly indifferent to the interruption which my remarks meet with on that side. What I was saying was that my hon. Friend was not very successful in his defence of the Lord Advocate's absence My hon. Friend said the Lord Advocate as everyone will acknowledge, works hard at his own business. I would like to ask my hon. Friend and the House what part of his own business it is the Lord Advocate is working hard at at the present moment. We know that the Lord Advocate is appearing in a very important will suit before the Scotch Courts, but the question is—it affects all the Law Officers of the Crown—how far the Law Officers are justified in allowing private practice to interfere with their public duties. To-morrow the Police Vote is to be brought on for discussion. What would be thought if the Home Secretary, who is primarily responsible in the matter, were not in his place to defend his conduct? In this matter we are bound, not only as Scotch Members but as individual independent Members of the House of Commons, to enter our emphatic protest against being kept further in the dark as to the Government's views in regard to police superannuation. A gross insult has been cast upon Scotch Members, not so much by the Lord Advocate as by the Government, who, when they bring a small modicum of Scotch business before the House, have not the decency to see that the Minister who is responsible for its conduct should be present.

(11.6.) MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I rise not so much for the purpose of supporting the Motion, but to suggest a way out of the difficulty. I do not see much in the objection that the Lord Advocate is not here. The First Lord of the Treasury has told us that there are occasions when the Lord Advocate for Scotland is justified in being absent, and that this is one of those occasions. I think that explanation is more disrespectful to the Lord Advocate than it is to Scotland or the Scotch Members. But the man who ought to be here is not the Lord Advocate but the Secretary for Scotland. I for one would be prepared to go on with the discussion of the Bill with the Lord Advocate represented on this occasion by the Solicitor General for Scotland, who, as far as I know, is just as competent and as well entitled to the respect of the House as the Lord Advocate. But there is one condition to my assent, and that touches the second ground on which the Motion to report Progress is based. We do not know the meaning of the sub-section we are called upon to debate. In putting this sub-section in its present form the Government are sinning against the positive warning they received a week ago in respect to a similar sub-section to the English clause. We protested against discussing a sub-section which did not explain its own meaning, and which could only be explained by reference to a Bill which, as far as we know, is not in existence. The Solicitor General for Scotland has admitted he knows the contents of that Bill. I will not vote for this Motion if the Solicitor General for Scotland will, after the Motion is withdrawn, get up in his place and state what the contents of the Bill for the superannuation of the police in Scotland are. But if the Solicitor General stands upon his silence or sits upon his silence, and refuses to give the House the knowledge which is essential to the discussion of this sub-section, then I shall have no alternative but to go into the Lobby in support of the Motion to report Progress.

*(11.10.) MR. SEYMOUR KEAY (who was received with cries of "Divide !"): I will not detain the Committee more than one moment after this uproar has ceased. I merely rose to support the Motion for the purpose of asking the President of the Local Government Board for some reply to the pointed question I put to him during my speech at the dinner hour.

THE CHAIRMAN: That speech I understood to refer to licensing.

*MR. SEYMOUR KEAY: If I am not in order I will sit down at once. My impression was that on a Motion to report Progress a Member might elicit from a Minister of Her Majesty's Government some reply to an important question asked in a speech which had been made. If that is not so I must take another opportunity of obtaining a reply.

(11.12.) DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I must confess some astonishment at the extraordinary attitude of hon. Members opposite. I suppose that after the races they want a little fun, but Scotch Members are entitled to insist that business shall be conducted in a manner beneficial to the nation they represent. The Lord Advocate is absent, but there is another Member of the Government who might conveniently be present——

An hon. MEMBER: Will you kindly speak up?

DR. TANNER: I am afraid the hon. Member's hearing is as obtuse as his intellect. I should have thought that upon an occasion like the present, especially when the Lord Advocate is absent, the Chief Secretary for Ireland might have been in his place. I regret extremely that the Solicitor General for Scotland does not consider it part of his duty to remain in the House, and accordingly I shall with a great deal of pleasure support the Motion to report progress. It is obvious to the mind of the meanest, the most ordinary observer —(*Cries of* "Hear, hear!")—of course, if the cap fits I do not object. Seeing the jaded condition of the Treasury Bench I think it would be well to report Progress and proceed with other business of benefit to the country. There is the Barracks Bill upon the Paper. We are assured that is an important Bill. I suppose I should be out of order in discussing that Bill, and I always strive to keep in order, but——

Mr. LAMBERT rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

(11.20.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 274; Noes 221.—(Div. List, No. 149.)

Question put accordingly, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."

(11.30.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 230; Noes 273.—(Div. List, No. 150.)

Question again proposed, "That Sub-section (i.) stand part of the Clause."

(11.49.) **DR. CAMERON**: This, Sir, is a very unfortunate matter. The question of police superannuation, whatever view we may entertain about its merits, is one on which there is very strong feeling one way or the other. It is a matter on which I think hon. Members will be called upon by their constituents to justify the vote they have given, and I would ask whether it is proper that at this hour of the night we should start discussing it. There has been practically no discussion whatever upon the merits of the proposal. The hon. Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) moved the rejection of the sub-section, and he was followed by my right hon. Friend the Member for Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman). These were the only two gentlemen who discussed the merits of the proposal. They were followed by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir G. Campbell), who moved to report Progress. I would point out that if we postpone the consideration of the question now, we shall have the discussion on the Vote for the Police before it can come on again. On the smallest sign that the Government assent to this course I will sit down. As we cannot have the Motion for Progress twice in succession, I move that you now leave the Chair.

Motion made, and question proposed, "That the Chairman do now leave the Chair."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

(11.51.) **DR. TANNER**: I was Closured when I supported the Motion for reporting Progress, and, accordingly, I understand that the proper Motion now is that you, Sir, do leave the Chair. I regret extremely that Her Majesty's Government are in such a ridiculous position, and I sympathise with the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not speaking to the question.

DR. TANNER: I really regret if I have in any way transgressed; but having been Closured just now on the Motion to report Progress, I felt bound to vindicate my position, and to show that the right hon. Gentleman was in the wrong, whereas I was in the right.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Question again proposed, "That Sub-section (1) stand part of the Clause."

*(11.54.) **MR. RITCHIE**: Of course, it would be perfectly useless for the Government to press forward with the Bill during the time that is still at their disposal; but I wish to take notice of some remarks that fell from the hon. Member for the College Division (Dr. Cameron). He says that there has been no discussion on this clause. Why has there been no discussion? Because the time of the Committee has been deliberately wasted.

MR. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland): I rise to a point of order. I wish to know whether the right hon. Gentleman is justified in saying of any hon. Members of the House that they had deliberately wasted the time of the Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman is not out of order.

*MR. RITCHIE: The question was spoken to by the hon. Member who moved the rejection of the clause, and by other hon. Members. [*Opposition cries of* "Withdraw!"]

THE CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman is entitled to uninterrupted speech.

*MR. RITCHIE: Then the Debate was interrupted by the Motion to report Progress, moved because of the absence of my right hon. Friend the Lord Advocate. The Committee were aware that one of the Law Officers of Scotland was in his place perfectly prepared to defend the provisions of the Bill. It was alleged, also, that the Bill was not produced, though my hon. and learned Friend and I myself stated that the provisions of the Bill with reference to police superannuation in Scotland were precisely the same as the provisions of the Bill relating to England. So far from there not being a Minister here in charge of Scotch business, and so far from the Committee not being in full possession of the proposals of the Government——[*Opposition cries of* "Question!"]

MR. E. ROBERTSON: I beg to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is in order in discussing the merits of a Motion which has already been decided by the Committee?

THE CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman is certainly not strictly in order, but he is replying to the observations which I think he is entitled to reply to.

*MR. RITCHIE: I shall not trespass further on the time of the House. I maintain that the allegations I made at the commencement of my remarks are fully justified.

(11.59.) MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): This experience will be a lesson to us not to allow any other clause of the Bill to be taken, as we allowed the 1st clause practically without any discussion.

It being midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I wish to ask the President of the Local Government Board what business it is intended to take on Monday? The business, I hear, is the Procedure Order for carrying over Bills.

MR. GOSCHEN: Will the right hon. Gentleman ask a question of the leader of the House to-morrow?

MR. J. MORLEY: I really think we have a right to know.

MR. GOSCHEN: If the right hon. Gentleman will repeat the question on the Motion for the Adjournment of the House I will attempt to give an answer.

MR. T. M. HEALY: What day is the Bill going to be put down for?

*MR. RITCHIE: Monday.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACTS AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 239.)

Bill considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time to-morrow.

PHARMACY ACT (IRELAND) (1875) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 241.)

COMMITTEE.

(12.7.) Order for Committee read.

DR. TANNER: I object.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I hope the hon. Member will not press his objection.

DR. TANNER: I object. I must do so, for the simple reason that a great many objections have been raised to the Bill. I think the hon. Member in charge of it would do wisely to get it referred to a Select Committee.

(12.8.) MR. SEXTON: I hope my hon. Friend will allow this Bill to proceed. There are about 3,000 persons in Ireland interested in the trade. The matter has been the subject of negotiations between the bodies interested, and the questions of difference have been fined down to a very small point; while my hon. Friend the Member for North Longford has agreed to postpone the Amendment standing in his name. I hope my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork will not make himself the sole opponent in this House of a very useful Bill.

(12.9.) DR. TANNER: I have heard from so many medical gentlemen in Ireland specific objections to this Bill that it is solely on that ground I object.

I would with the greatest possible pleasure allow the Bill to go through if I could conscientiously do so, but I must really object on the present occasion.

(12.10.) MR. T. M. HEALY : I would suggest to the hon. Member that his Amendments could be brought up on the Report stage.

DR. TANNER : I must object.

Committee deferred till to-morrow.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) RATING BILL.
(No. 149.)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

(12.15.) MR. SEXTON : I object to this Bill not because of its proposals, but because of the manner in which it is drafted. Still, with this protest the Bill may proceed.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 2.

MR. SEXTON : It appears to me that this clause, as amended, is not sense. Surely it is intended to combine Clauses 2 and 3.

(12.16.) MR. MADDEN : I would suggest to the hon. Member to allow the Bill to pass ; it can be re-committed if necessary. In the Bill, Clauses 2 and 3 will become Clause 2.

MR. SEXTON : The difficulty is that the Amendments apply to separate clauses.

(12.17.) MR. T. M. HEALY : I cannot see why a proposal to rate a house according to the time it is occupied should have to be assented to by the Irish Local Government Board. Surely that ought not to be insisted on ?

MR. MADDEN : If the hon. and learned Member will put an Amendment on the Paper, I shall be happy to consider it before the Report.

DR. TANNER : As the Amendments make this measure so intricate, I move that we report Progress.

THE CHAIRMAN : It would greatly facilitate Progress if the hon. Member

Dr. Tanner

would allow these Amendments first to be carried.

MR. T. M. HEALY : I think the Bill had better proceed. The Government undertake to re-commit it if necessary ?

MR. MADDEN : Certainly.

MR. CHANCE : I trust the Government will re-print the Bill.

MR. MADDEN : Yes.

Bill reported ; as amended, to be printed [Bill 350] ; re-committed for Monday next.

INTOXICATING LIQUORS (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 7.)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House will, upon Wednesday 2nd July, again resolve itself into the said Committee."—(*Mr. Lea.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY : I object. Under these circumstances, I think the Bill must be set down for this day (Friday).

MR. T. W. RUSSELL : No ; July 2.

Objection having been taken, MR. SPEAKER ascertained by the preponderance of voices that the House was in favour of Wednesday, 2nd July.

Committee deferred till Wednesday 2nd July.

TENANTS' COMPENSATION BILL.— (No. 259.)

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION BILL.

The Select Committee on the Infant Life Protection Bill was nominated of :—Mr. Bartley, Mr. William Corbet, Lord Francis Hervey, Mr. John Kelly, Mr. Knowles, Mr. William Lawrence, Mr. Walter M'Laren, Mr. Storey-Maskelyne, Mr. Mather, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, Mr. Powell, Mr. Parker Smith, Mr. Francis Stevenson, Mr. John Wilson, Mr. Woodall, and Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

House adjourned at half after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 20th June, 1890.

FLASHING SIGNALS — ADMIRAL COLOMB'S INVENTION.

QUESTION—OBSERVATIONS.

*LORD ELPHINSTONE: Before the noble and gallant Lord puts his question whether Her Majesty's Government are now in a position to state what reward they propose to give to Admiral Colomb for his invention of flashing signals, I hope I shall not put him to any inconvenience if I ask him to postpone it. The fact is, I am not in a position to give him an answer, for the matter has been out of the hands of the Admiralty for a considerable time now, and is before the Treasury. My noble Friend, however, must not imagine from that that the matter is in any way hung up or has found its way into the proverbial pigeon hole, because it is only a few days ago since we received a letter at the Admiralty from the Treasury asking for further particulars in the matter. If he will postpone his question until next week, I hope to be able to give him an answer.

*LORD SUDELEY: My Lords, I am very happy to put off the question, but I sincerely trust we shall soon receive an answer as to when this matter is likely to be settled. It has been pending now for several years, and it certainly seems a long time to have the matter hung up.

COST OF PUBLIC EDUCATION.

*LORD NORTON: My Lords, the object I have in moving for the Return of which I have given notice is simply that the public at large may be made aware of the amount of the Treasury Votes made yearly for public national education, wholly irrespective of the charge on local rates, voluntary contributions, endowment, fees, and any other private sources. I hear many men boast that this country is so magnificent in support of education that it votes £5,000,000 a year for the purpose; but I suppose, when this Return is made, which adds to the Public Education Votes those for the Science and Art Department, the Reformatory and Industrial Schools, English, Scotch, Welsh, and Irish Colleges, Military and Naval Colleges, Academies and schools, it will be found that the £5,000,000 will be increased to £10,000,000, at least, from the Treasury alone; and if to that were added the voluntary contributions, endowments, and other private contributions, I fancy the actual expenditure of this country for national education would be very little short of £20,000,000 a year. I do not in the slightest degree grudge that sum. I think, on the contrary, that £20,000,000 a year spent in such an object of first-rate national importance would be well-spent—that is, if it were well-spent. But that, I think, is not the case. What I want to call your Lordships' attention to is whether it is not very ill-spent, very wastefully spent, a great deal of the money going for things which might be very much better done otherwise. Now, the Resolution suggests that all the education which is above what may be called elementary, ought to be defrayed by parents who are both able and willing to defray the expense of the education of their children. Elementary education being the proposed object of these Treasury Votes and the only education wanted by all the nation, higher kinds of instruction in science and art should be paid for entirely from private resources, endowments, and fees paid on the actual receipt of the tuition. The only contributions from the Treasury should be by way of exhibitions and scholarships for poor children who show both the capacity and the desire for that higher education, and who should, in that way, have perfectly free access to the higher schools. I do not wish at this moment to refer to the elementary education given in rural districts at all. That, in fact, cannot be said properly to comprise higher education. In none of our rural districts do the elementary schools go into specific subjects, and very few of the children in those schools reach the Seventh Standard. I will say a word about that afterwards. What I wish to refer to now is higher education. As to the elementary education in rural districts, I still maintain that that should in all cases, except in cases of absolute poverty, be partly, at all events, supported by fees. In rural districts they do not attempt specific subjects, yet for them the higher grants are given, while properly higher fees should be paid, because for richer children. Mr. Forster expressed his intention that such subjects, being taught to those more able to pay for them, should not be aided by grants at all; and in that view he adopted the 9d. fee, at the top of a scale of payment from 1d. weekly. The cry for free education is already, I am glad to see, pretty well seen through and is subsiding. ["No."] The noble Marquess dissents as to the fact, but I can only say that some of its principal advocates have confessed to me that it is subsiding. The fact is, that freedom is seen to mean all being alike taxed, whether they use the schools or not. That is, I think, a very curious sort of free education. The extra 1d. or 2d. which a well-to-do labourer or artisan pays towards the education of his children in these schools is seen not only to be just, but most valuable in order that parents may have some notion that they are contributing at least towards their children's education, and that they are not wholly quartered upon the country. The argument that when attendance in the schools is made compulsory by the State, the State should pay the entire cost of it is now laughed at. Is the State to defray the cost of whatever it compels to be done? Take the case of removal of nuisances, and children brought up in neglect are the greatest of public nuisances. I am led by the cheer of the noble Marquess to say that I think the assistance which the country is expecting from him next year is a very different thing from what is called free education. But, my Lords, we must recollect what elementary education is. It is not mere instruction, elementary or higher, but it includes the religious, moral, and intellectual training of the great mass of the children of the people in whatever position they may afterwards have to live. My Resolution does not refer to the elementary education in rural districts; it refers to science and art. It does not seek to interfere with that early teaching and training which is wanted by the whole nation — that is, the elementary education for all; but it applies to that instruction which is wanted by those who are going into skilled employments; and what I want to call your Lordships' attention to is the question whether that scientific and technical instruction ought to be charged upon public taxation in all cases whether such aid is necessary or not. We must bear in mind that many towns in this country are supplied with sufficient and efficient means of tuition of that kind from private resources, and from the fees of those able and willing to pay for it; and the means for providing this higher education often come from endowments which are as much private contributions as if their founders were still alive. Should anything more be contributed to that by the people at large than scholarships for children, fit and wanting to use it, whose parents are unable to pay for it? The Commissioners of 1868 proposed to develop, and adapt in three grades to the various localities in the country, such endowed or private middle schools. They calculated that, with very moderate endowments (and the third grade without any endowment), the very best quality of this science teaching, would require fees from £3 to £6 a year. I have a letter here showing that that calculation is correct. The United Westminster School of 850 boys at this moment exemplifies the highest development of the third grade of Board School at a total cost of £7 a head per annum. In the Cowper Street School, with 1,000 boys, the total cost is £6 per annum. The writer says that if the education is to be really good, and to comprise proper science teaching, perhaps it can hardly be done in London for less than £6 per head; but in country towns such schools would cost less, say £5, and for girls the charge would be less than for boys, say £3. With all such schemes are combined free scholarships for poor, clever children winning them. The parents who want to send children to these middle-class schools mainly consist of two classes. That fact should be borne in mind, in regard to the children generally wanting this secondary instruction beyond the elementary training. The Commissioners of 1868 described one class, the poorer of these middle-class parents, as journeymen, managers of works, clerks, and petty tradesmen; and the richer as larger manufacturers and professional men. It was proposed by the Commissioners that the graded middle schools should be in two divisions, in order to accommodate that difference of wealth and station, those two divisions being the usual commercial and classical sides. Unfortunately, the re-distribution of existing endowments involved in the Commissioners' recommendations, owing to the shifting of the population from the agricultural to the manufacturing localities, was so resisted as to frustrate their proposal. Otherwise, I have myself no doubt that new endowments would have sprung up to meet the full requirements of the case. But persons were checked in providing such endowments, because what are called higher Board schools were allowed to spring up in various towns throughout the country, not only where middle schools were wanted, but in some instances in absolute competition with endowed and private middle schools which were sufficient for the purpose, and efficiently doing their work. Government Board schools have been allowed to undertake this advanced tuition, checking and even competing with private supply, at an almost unlimited and wasteful expenditure to the public, on what was so much better provided for. Only yesterday I was presenting prizes at a first-rate grammar school at Chesterfield, and I found that the numbers there were kept down very much owing to a Board school giving precisely the same education—it might not have been really as good, but thought good enough by rich manufacturers, who were tempted to send their children there because they could get by aid of rates this education for 9d. a week, instead of £8 or £9 a year. They were thus, by the rivalry of the Board school, starving their own grammar school. I suppose no one would dispute that parents of private means providing equally good requisite education for their own children is infinitely preferable both for the free and independent spirit of this country, and for the unfettered and unofficial training of children, than an eleemosynary and Government system. I think it will be admitted that an independent system of education is infinitely superior for the nation to any Government plan. Another great fault of the higher Board schools in towns is that not only do they compete with the endowed schools, but they are also in mischievous competition with the elementary Board schools, because, pretending to give higher instruction, they begin at the bottom like the others, and so become practically only aristocratic editions of the same school used by the aristocracy of the towns, paying 9d. a week to have their children educated free from contact with the dirty 2d. children for whom the public education was primarily intended. Two amendments in our practice seem to me to be called for to meet these faults—first, that wherever there are endowed or private schools, sufficient and efficient for the purpose, in any town, the Department should not sanction the establishment and competition of higher Board schools at the public charge. That is my first proposition, and I hope it will meet with general assent. My second proposition is that where such higher Board schools are set up children should not be admitted to them under the fifth standard. If those two amendments were carried out I think a good many of the faults complained of in the present system would be met. That is all the alteration I ask for. I suggest that the only contribution to such higher schools from the Treasury should be in the way of free scholarships for the cleverer children of the poorer classes who are able to make use of them, that is to say, those showing capacity and a desire for higher instruction, but whose parents cannot afford to keep them longer at school to qualify them for skilled employment. But it seems to me that the folly of the public undertaking the higher education of the children of richer parents, and the folly of having two sets of so-called higher and elementary schools undertaking the same work, is not unlikely, by extravagant waste of money, to cause a far greater moral mischief by causing a rough reaction against the whole system of education altogether. There are two sets of Board schools beginning at the elements and going on to science; the elementary schools attempting science in the most unscientific manner, and the scientific schools beginning at the elements as if there were no elementary schools. Those who advocate these things will find that they are only forcing on the great mass of the community to crowd the employments, not a bit more honourable than manual labour, that are ordinarily filled by the artisan. The London Board schools are at this moment expending nearly £5 per head for every child in them per annum, while the calculation in 1870 was that 30s. would be sufficient. The total expenditure for the children in these schools is, I believe, £4 17s. 6d., and there is this cause for dissatisfaction, that while they are making this enormously increased expenditure they are not increasing the number of children for whom they provide schools according to the ratio of the increase of population. The additional number last year was 3,000, while it ought to have been nearer 10,000. They are not doing one-third of their work in providing for the increased numbers of children. People have argued as if the Scotch plan or the American plan were ours, and our manufacturers are eager for apprentices trained at public expense. But that is not the fact. The Scotch provision for public schools comprises grammar schools and high schools, and those who in England hope to get such a public commercial education upon our elementary education basis are making a great mistake. The Fraser Report to the Commissioners of 1868 shows that Americans are not using the School Rate for all classes. The richer classes are mostly using private schools, and the poorer classes are complaining at having to pay anything for the education of the richer. In saying that, I do not now suggest anything about rural elementary schools. I do not intend to express satisfaction with the mode in which they are dealt with. I consider that in the higher standards children should pay higher fees and receive smaller grants than in the lower standards, as representing education for which parents can easily pay. I think that where there are higher middle schools the elementary schools should stop at a certain standard, and that the children should go from that standard into the higher school instead of the higher school beginning at the A B C, and overlapping the other. Nowhere should boys going to manual labour be kept at school and deprived of the apprenticeship they can only acquire by early practice in their work. A boy sailor, kept at school until he could read in the Fifth Standard one of Shakespeare's plays to the satisfaction of Her Majesty's Inspectors, would be prevented from taking his proper place among British seamen. I know I cannot affect the existing Code of this year. It is too late now to do that; but I cannot help hoping that by calling your Lordships' attention to this subject I shall have more or less affected the concoction of the Code of next year, which, we are led to expect, will be a final edition. We may hope that there will be some definite principle adopted, and not a mischievous uncertainty in the whole of our system of national education. The new Code, while admitting that the system of payment by results is condemned, retains far too much of it. Yesterday a conference of managers, like birds of prey, were gathering round the decaying old system to see what pickings they could still get out of it. As to technical schools, the Report which was only presented yesterday by the Science and Art Department shows that anything yet done under the Act of last year is still merely in embryo. Everybody who desires to act upon it wants to know what it means, and how to set it in motion. I know the difficulty of attaching a meaning to that vague term "technical education." In the Act it means anything which South Kensington says it shall mean; bnt few attempts have been made chiefly in the way of drawing, which is done in the elementary schools, or, as I have seen in Birmingham, where children are set to work to saw and plane bits of wood. It is only a pretence to call these schools technical, and to undertake them by public means is really standing in the way of manufacturers, such as Whitworth, each in his own line training apprentices for his own work. That would be the best way for competition with the foreign market, and would afford the most practical instruction in various trades. The Government should cease to dream of teaching even the elements of arts everywhere. My Lords, I hope you will agree that the cost of higher education, that is, instruction in science and art, above the elements (and my proposition involves a definition of what elementary education is), should be borne as far as possible by the parents who are perfectly willing and able to pay proper fees, or by endowments, which are as much private contributions as if the founder were still alive. The only way in which the Treasury should contribute to schools of special apprenticeships is by providing exhibitions and scholarships for children who show capacity, but are unable to pay.

Moved—

"For a Return of all money voted by Parliament for education in the year ending April last:

1. For public education, elementary and technical, in England, Scotland, and Ireland;
2. Science and Art Department, including agriculture;
3. Reformatory and industrial schools;
4. Queen's colleges, Ireland, and Welsh colleges;
5. Military and naval colleges, academies, and schools;

And "That in the opinion of this House elementary education should be more distinctly defiend in 'the Code,' as recommended by the Royal Commissioners, and the cost of all public instruction above such limits should be met by fees, or by exhibitions for children of the wage earning class capable and desirous of availing themselves of it, or by endowments."—(*The Lord Norton.*)

*LORD COLCHESTER: My Lords, I agree very heartily with what has been said by my noble Friend in calling the attention of the House to this matter. In the first instance I think there can be no doubt that what is being done in many cases out of the rates in aid of schools goes beyond the original intentions of those who promoted the Elementary Education Act. The object of passing that Act was to remove the great weight of ignorance pressing upon the poorer classes, whose children are compelled to leave school at an early age. There are some people who seem to think that the best system is that of Switzerland, where almost every grade of education, high and low, is paid for by the State; but that is not the principle, I think, which England is prepared to accept. Then it has been said that everyone who pays the rates in support of these schools would be at liberty to use them for the education of their children. That, I think, is very much on a par with the argument that everyone who pays the poor rate is entitled to the benefit of outdoor relief. I think the expense thrown upon the public at large by this system of elementary schools doing the work of secondary education produces great waste, because they are driving out of the field other classes of schools which can best carry out the work of higher and technical education. Now my noble Friend has referred to the Commission which reported in 1868, and whose Report has been the foundation of all the Acts subsequently passed in relation to endowed schools. That Report certainly did say that a third grade of schools was a great want in this country, and that the higher education should be more efficiently provided for. As the noble Lord has said, they considered that it was the great use of all the smaller endowments throughout England that they should be applied for that purpose. It was to provide for the education of a class rather better off than those who attend the elementary schools, or of those who might be selected from the elementary schools, and as to whom it was considered worth while that, having shown capacity, they should be afforded the means of continuing their education to a greater age, and of entering upon the higher subjects. But, my Lords, I know that in a great many cases those endowments have been almost rendered useless, and they have been almost driven out of the field by the competition of the rate-supported schools, which are maintained out of public funds contributed by the ratepayers. There are a great many of these endowments which for obvious reasons ought to be applied to the lowest form of secondary education. Those endowments were intended, to a great extent, for the benefit of the poorer classes, and they would give those classes a benefit which they could not obtain in any other form. Then, if they are applied a step higher, to the higher secondary education, it would be necessary to raise the fees paid by those who receive it, because there would then be given an education which is not so very much required or desired by the poorer class, for whom, as I have stated, in many cases the smaller endowments were largely intended. The reason their administration has been so much attacked in many quarters is that they are used to a great extent for the middle instead of for the poorer classes. At the present time the schools are undertaking what is the proper work of the endowments, and they are now being made very difficult to apply for any useful purpose. It may be said, "That is all very well; but though there are many places which have, there are many places which have not these endowments." If it were recognised that this is a want of the country which can be supplied by a little relaxation of the restrictions hitherto imposed upon them, these endowments might be made useful over a considerable extent of the country. Then the noble Lord has referred to the voluntary efforts which have been made to supply schools throughout the country; and I think it would have been shown that by voluntary efforts these requirements could have been met, had it not been that to a great extent they have been killed by the competition of the schools subsidised from the rates. There is another point to which I will refer. Many people say, "Why should not the elementary schools keep on a certain number of boys a little longer for obtaining the higher education—why should not the boys be allowed to go on who have been educated from the beginning in the elementary schools?" Well, there is this difficulty: that the whole plan of secondary education from the first being different you cannot have it carried on on the same lines as the primary education. If a boy is to remain at school up to a certain age there is no reason why, if he is fit for them, he should not take up the higher studies at an earlier age than that at which the education of others ceases, why he should be educated in the elementary school until 12, and then only begin the secondary education within the last two years. He would probably be able to take it up at a much earlier age. But I think it is undesirable that the primary and secondary schools should be mixed up together. On the other hand, not only is the secondary school more expensive, but it is attended by a class who are better able to pay, and for that education higher fees ought to be paid. The argument that clever but poorer children should not be deprived of the opportunity of obtaining that higher education, may be met by the proposal that exhibitions and scholarships should be provided out of the public money if they cannot be provided out of educational endowments. By this system of allowing elementary schools to enter upon a province which is not theirs you are not only increasing the expense, but deranging the proper course of education. The objection to the present system is not merely pecuniary, it is also educational. I can vouch for the accuracy of the figures which have been stated by my noble Friend as to the cost at which the Third Grade education can be carried out and the expenditure now entailed by attempting to give this lower form of technical education. I think the employment of endowments is the proper mode of carrying out that object, and that the present system is a derangement of the proper educational system, which brings together and mixes up what ought to be kept entirely separate. It puts an end to private action and tends to kill voluntary effort.

*EARL FORTESCUE: My Lords, the point which I wish principally to dwell upon in the few remarks I shall have to offer to your Lordships is the urgent need which exists of some definition, if not of what elementary education is, at any rate of what elementary education is not. There seems to me no very intelligible line drawn which can serve as a guide between even the highest University curriculum and elementary school teaching in the schools under the direction of the Minister of Education; because it is to be remembered that Ministers may take different views, and may introduce many things into a Code, and, as that becomes law after lying on the Tables of both Houses for 40 days, there is no saying what we may find done by some future Minister of Education. The urgent need of some intelligible line being drawn between elementary and non-elementary schools is one that I have long felt, and have often pressed, both *vivâ voce* in your Lordships' House and in print. I have repeatedly protested against Government aiding by grants, and therefore securing the right to interfere with higher education, which was in that masterly Report of the Commission of 1868 described as "secondary education;" but now secondary education is liable to come before us disguised under the name of technical instruction, or of advanced elementary schools, which one of the highest educational authorities in the country—Bishop Temple—said "ought to be called non-elementary," and he added that it was about "the worst way in which money could be applied in the promotion of education." Now, my Lords, Parliament and the public generally have been trying in various ways to encourage thrift, especially among the wage-earning classes, and that not merely for the sake of promoting the accumulation of capital and of preventing waste—an accumulation which, in the aggregate, is considerable, though made up of very small sums—but even more for the purpose of encouraging a spirit of independence and of self-reliance, as well as self-denial among the poorer classes of the people. Well, my Lords, we are now, on the contrary, threatened with what I venture to say is mis-called "free education." But the real description of what is called free education is State-paid or rate-paid education. It may not, in some instances, be the result of private benevolence that gratitude is elicited; but all experience shows that alms given by an individual—how often, as a rule, injudiciously given?—at least elicit some feelings of gratitude; but anything eleemosynary given out of rates and taxes is grudgingly given by the ratepayers and thankfully received by the recipients. It altogether misses all the wholesome beneficial influences which emanate from eleemosynary gifts made at the expense of self-denial in the giver. I may say that, apart from this idea of free education, a most mischievous system has grown up of late of sanctioning Government grants of money for educational purposes on a greatly enlarged scale, which has been encouraging the very reverse of the principle which in other capacities we have been trying to develop. We have been thus encouraging a habit of constant reliance on the Government, and constant applications from various bodies for assistance. One industry after another appeals for Government grants, and the great important agricultural interest, which generally moves rather slowly, has at last joined in the general scramble, and has been moving earnestly to get some public money. Everyone seems to be trying to get something out of the rates and taxes—a melancholy change within the lifetime of some of us from the habitual love of independence and self-reliance, which was supposed to be the characteristic of Englishmen. We have had examples at South Kensington of grants being sought for and obtained, especially in a very little agricultural department there, by schools in the heart of London, and in the heart of such large towns as Liverpool, for instance. A very large proportion of those little grants have been obtained by schools in towns not in the least for the benefit of the scholars, but for the benefit of the teachers, not with any reasonable prospect of improving the work of agriculture in any agricultural district, but to obtain a certain number of pounds sterling for the particular schools. I will not repeat on the present occasion what I have often reminded your Lordships of, that the tendency of Government establishments is towards stagnation, and too often after a time to jobbery. Stagnation is particularly to be deplored in the case of higher education; and it would be a terrible misfortune if the higher education of the country comes to be manipulated by a Government Department. As to jobbery, the worst part of it is not the waste of money, but the demoralisation and the degrading influence which it exercises in all directions. We surely ought not to extend Government interference further than is absolutely necessary for the good of the country. I understand that that high educational authority, Lord Lingen, says that elementary education ought as such to be considered to stop at the Fourth Standard. I entirely agree with him. Any child who has reached the attainments certified by passing the Fourth Standard has the requisite means of extending his knowledge indefinitely, and particularly if, as both my noble Friends have, I think, very truly said, assistance is given from public money by means of scholarships and exhibitions to superior schools. If there are only one or two children pursuing the higher studies in an elementary school, those higher studies which we find some wishing should be carried on in every school, they will study at very great disadvantage as compared with those who are carrying on the same studies in a class with others in the same state of proficiency, for the spirit of emulation and sympathy will be very much wanting to them. Besides that, for a very small, infinitesimal number of students you will demand a great deal of energy and time from the already, too often, rather overworked teacher in a small school. Now, scholarships from the elementary schools to the higher ones may be provided either out of the taxes by the State or by the Local Bodies out of the rates, which is a little questionable in principle perhaps, but still open to little objection, or by the benevolence of those who are interested in education, many of whom have (as I have myself) contributed for the purpose of giving scholarships to higher schools for the most promising boys from the elementary schools who are *ex hypothesi* capable of profiting by the higher instruction and are desirous of doing so. As my noble Friend has very truly said, the great majority of children cannot be expected in the short time that precedes the necessity of their earning, or helping to earn, their livelihood, to make very much progress; and their detention at school in order to attain a particular standard and a certain amount of book-learning, the retention of which is very short and precarious in their case, prevents their learning what is of greater consequence to them. In order to do that you prevent their learning, at the most favourable time, the business of their lives, and thus qualifying themselves to become skilled instead of unskilled workmen. You do this at considerable cost and at the sacrifice of an amount of work for employers, and especially for agricultural employers, which, though small perhaps in the case of each child, is in the aggregate very considerable; and all this because you will not recognise the essential difference there is between those who are naturally capable and desirous of profiting by the opportunities of higher education placed within their reach, and those who are willing and desirous, as are their parents also, to learn more of the future business of their lives instead. Perhaps I have detained you too long with my own strong convictions on this subject, though I may remind your Lordships they are shared by many others. I will only say that they are borne out by the elaborate Report of the Education Commissioners which was presented in 1888. In the summary of their recommendations they say that

> "As the meaning and limits of the term 'elementary school' have not been defined in the Education Acts, nor by any judicial or authoritative interpretation, but depend only on the annual Codes of the Department, no whose power of framing such Codes no limit has hitherto been imposed, it would appear to be of absolute necessity"

—very strong words, my Lords, for a strong Commission to use—

> "That some definition of the instruction to be paid for out of the rates and taxes should be given by the Legislature. Until this is done, the limits of primary and secondary education cannot be defined."

In the Report they describe the successive Codes as emanating from successive Ministers, and Lord Lingen very much disapproves of that system, and describes that unlimited power as "dangerous." But the Commissioners elaborate this, and it is one of the conclusions they arrive at. In giving their summary they say, at page 145—

> "Since 1870 the practice of the Department has continually raised and extended the various limits of elementary education so as gradually to include a range of subjects proper to schools for higher education. It is given in evidence that languages, classical and modern, advanced science"

—just what may be taught, my Lords, and is being taught, at the Universities of the land—might be taught in elementary schools, and that parents of all classes had a right, and were at liberty, to send their children to them.

> "Not a few of the children of the wealthy classes,"

as my noble Friend has already stated,

> "are attending the Board Schools. It does not appear that in 1870 this result was contemplated; and it has become a matter of serious complaint, especially to those of the poorer classes, who are compelled to pay the School Board rates. The Act of 1870 enables the Department to frame and impose a Code which after lying a month on the Table in the Houses of Parliament become law."

Now, my Lords, I will just give a sample of the great power, I may say the legislative power, exercised by the Department. The Act of 1870 says that it does not include any school in which the ordinary payments in respect of the instruction for each scholar exceeds 9d. per week. It seems from that that the intention of the Legislature was very obvious that 9d. a week was the utmost limit. What says the Code of a few years ago?—a Code which I was not so much surprised to find emanating from a Government presided over by a master of subtle distinctions, and who, as Mr. Forster, I think it was, said, "Could persuade most men of most things and himself of almost anything." That Code speaks of—

> "The ordinary payment for each scholar . . . will, as a rule, be found by dividing the total amount of fees payable by the number of scholars on the registers for that week."

So that 3s. might be the amount of the fees for some, provided there were a sufficient number of 1d. scholars to bring the actual average down to 9d. My Lords, even the Minority Report says, "It is not desirable that the Department should defeat the plain meaning of an Act of Parliament." I would appeal to your Lordships whether the passage in the Code I have just read does not do so. I must say, my Lords, that it is with great regret I have seen the subsequent Codes at the hands of different Ministers continuing that, in my opinion, very objectionable clause, a clause unquestionably defeating the obvious intention of the Legislature. The Commissioners go on to say in their Report—

> "It would appear, therefore, of absolute necessity that the instruction to be paid for out of rates and taxes should be fixed by the Legislature. Until this is done the limits of primary and secondary education cannot be fixed."

And they say that this is desirable, because—

> "The indirect inclusion of the higher education in the elementary schools is injurious both to primary and secondary education."

Not only does this ruin and drive away the private adventure schools and reduce the endowed schools, founded by our ancestors, to a state of comparative inutility, but there is in consequence of it an immense waste of teaching power. Not only has it that bad effect, but it is sapping the spirit of independence and self-reliance, and inducing even the wealthy to lean upon the rates and taxes, and to endeavour to take advantage of these petty grants in aid of the education of their children, which are made out of the rates and taxes paid by their neighbours. Well, my Lords, this language which I have just read to you emanates from 15 out of the 23 Commissioners, and those conclusions were arrived at after an exhaustive inquiry. Those Commissioners were many of them men identified not only with education, distinguished not merely by their zeal for it, but by the services they have rendered to it; and, perhaps, I may be allowed to say that for the last half-century, I myself, in a much more humble way and on a much smaller scale, have devoted to education a great deal of time and thought, and in proportion, too, of money, more a good deal to elementary education than even to middle-class education. It is, therefore, from no indifference to the subject, from no desire certainly to keep back any poor child who is capable and desirous of profiting by the higher education, but from a deep conviction that the present system is wasteful in practice, inadequate in results, and enervating to the national character, that I have ventured so long to occupy the attention of your Lordships' House.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK): My Lords, I feel some difficulty in coming to a conclusion as to the points to which I am expected to reply, because my noble Friends have made speeches so discursive upon the whole subject of education, that I hardly know where I should begin and where I should leave off. With regard to the Returns which my noble Friend asks for, I can only say that, as far as my Department is concerned, we are quite prepared to give them, and, so far as I understand, the other Departments are also prepared to do so, with a slight alteration which has been suggested, and which my noble Friend has acceded to. My noble Friend told us first of all he was not going to enter into the question of elementary education at all, and he did not, I admit, go very far into the question; but my noble Friend who followed him has gone at great length into the point, and has questioned all the different measures connected with elementary education, not only in reference to the present Code, but in regard to the provisions under previous Acts. He has also called attention to other matters in reference to carrying into effect the present system of education, and has ventured upon an assertion, as far as I gather, that it has been stated by Lord Lingen that all elementary education should end at the Fourth Standard. I do not remember ever seeing or hearing such a statement of that noble Lord.

*EARL FORTESCUE: It was mentioned to me. I only say that I have heard it.

*VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: It is immaterial to the argument I do not desire to dwell upon it, but I thought I would ask my noble Friend for his authority.

LORD LINGEN: If I may be allowed to interpose for a moment, I did not hear the noble Lord make the statement now referred to, but the statement that is attributed to me, to the best of my recollection, I never did make.

*VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: Then we are called upon by my noble Friend to define what elementary education is not, if not what it is. That is a very extraordinary demand, for this Commission, upon which my noble Friend sat so long, with others who were so well qualified to deal with the subject, after sitting for nearly three years, came to the conclusion that they could give no definition, and they thought they had better throw it upon others to get that definition in some shape which would be satisfactory to the country. Well, my Lords, I heard that it had been defined in a Scotch Act, and, as we know that Scotchmen are said to be so good at definitions, I looked up the Act to see if I could get any assistance there. I found the Scotch were not at all before us in the matter, for they only referred to it as "such education as may be given in the State-aided schools in Scotland pursuant to the provisions of the Education Act." I do not think that carries us very far. Then, as far as we are concerned, we endeavour to lay down a limit; because the Department I am connected with has only to deal with elementary education. Therefore, my Lords, the Code we have produced would be supposed to state how far we think elementary education can be carried; but, after all, if we go into particulars, there is no such thing as can by a hard line be limited as "elementary education." Elementary education embraces, among other things, religious education. Well, that is excluded from the present system of elementary education. It is not necessary for any State-aided school to give any religious education at all. There is no saying what elementary education is, and, therefore, as far as any definition is required I must decline to make any attempt to give it. No one, however, will suppose that in laying down that you shall teach under elementary education reading, writing, and arithmetic, that merely mechanical process shall be carried out, and that it does not involve anything more. Nor can you say, even if those were prescribed as the limits of what was to be taught, that you could be sure of obtaining only elementary education. I think if you were to introduce Max Müller to teach the alphabet he would be able, in doing so, to give very advanced instruction indeed, which would carry those taught into very far-off regions of science, philological, ethnological, and otherwise. And so it goes on by degrees, so that I defy anyone to say where primary education ends and, secondary education begins. The distinction can, however, be made in a rough way, and the Department has made it in a rough way. My noble Friend wants us, as far as I can see, to say where fees shall begin and where they shall end. If I understand his Resolution I should read it to imply that up to the point at which he considers elementary education to end fees should not be paid, and yet I understood him in his speech to say something the very reverse of that, for he went on to say that beyond that the educational requirements of the poorer classes should be met by exhibitions and scholarships. My noble Friend opposite also would allow those additions to come in. Why is the State to come in and provide exhibitions and scholarships out of the public funds, and not to apply the public funds for the purpose of supplying the same education in another way, if it thinks best? My noble Friends say that voluntary effort has been dried up by what the State has done. Does anyone who is aware of the foundations of scholarships and technical schools, which we see day by day, venture to say that? A gentleman told me the other day that one of the great manufacturers of the county had, within about two years and a half, given away as much as £150,000 for purposes of education in this country, and, therefore, I think it is absurd to say that we are stopping all voluntary effort. I object altogether to arguing the question of education on such a Resolution as this. What we want in this country is something concrete to argue upon, not something merely abstract as is this Resolution which has been put down on the Notice Paper by my noble Friend. Then the "wage-earning classes" are referred to. My noble Friend spoke of exhibitions for the children of the wage-earning class. Why of the wage-earning class only? I am sorry to say there are many people in this country who do not belong to the wage-earning class who are just as poor as the wage-earners. Why are not they to be included? It would, I think, be the hardest case in the world that people often almost on the verge of pauperism, but not in the position of labourers, should not be allowed, simply because they are not labourers, to have their children taught in the higher schools by obtaining these scholarships and exhibitions. So that I object altogether to the terms in which my noble Friend has put this Resolution down. I should like also to call your Lordships' attention to this point. We have laid down, as far as we can, in the Code what we think fairly comes within the limits of elementary education. I say at once there is not one of the subjects put down there which cannot be taught in a manner which would carry it far beyond what would be considered elementary. If you examine the discussions which took place with the witnesses who were called before the Commission with regard to elementary education, you will find that it means one thing in one man's mind and another thing in the mind of another. Therefore, it shades off by degrees, primary education into secondary, without any possibility of drawing a rigid line between the two. Up to the Seventh Standard I consider that we are within the Code for elementary education, beyond that I consider we are outside it. With regard to the point to which my noble Friend Lord Fortescue called attention, it is quite true that the Commission was very anxious to make a distinction between secondary and primary education, but they did not do it. Nor did they altogether disclaim these higher grade schools to which my noble Friend has referred. On the contrary, they regretted that there were no means of extending them. They say on page 169 of the Report—

> "It is to be regretted that no practical suggestion was made for extending such higher education to rural districts or to populations below 10,000 or 15,000."

But they also said this—

> "If the curriculum of the higher elementary schools is restricted within due limits, avoiding the ground belonging to secondary education, and if due precautions are taken to secure that promising children of poor parents shall have the privilege of education afforded by the higher schools, then we are of opinion that such schools may prove useful additions to our school machinery."

What for? Secondary education? No; "for primary education." It may be urged that grants from the Government should not go to them. That is another thing, but I think it will be agreed that children should be allowed to go on, that they should have the opportunity of going further; and Scotland has been instanced, where they are allowed to go on even to the age of 18, and the advocates for continuing education do not see why that should not be so in England. I feel as strongly as anyone that we have infringed upon secondary education in our educational scheme, and there has been no doubt, in certain cases, some amount of competition; but I would say also that where the School Boards have entered into competition they represented the ratepayers, who have not debarred them from going into that competition. Therefore, whatever has been done in that respect has been done under the influence of the great body of public opinion, and not merely at the instance of one or two persons. Mention has been made of Chesterfield. I do not know the case to which my noble Friend refers, but I think it very likely that if a school is of a high character, with a fee payable not exceeding 9d. per week, many people would be ready to send their children there. My noble Friend (Lord Colchester) who has been connected with the Charity Commission told you that they have endeavoured to meet the wants of the country by these scholarships and exhibitions. Your Lordships must remember that these scholarships and exhibitions are only to be won by competition, and they are only obtained by the ablest children. I would venture to call my noble Friend's attention to a point which he has perhaps not studied. It appears that in some of these cases where the Charity Commissioners have instituted scholarships and exhibitions, they have forgotten that if they give a scholarship of a certain class to a poor boy, that is not enough unless they give him maintenance money, and in certain cases, especially in large towns like Liverpool, it has been found that poor children have been unable to hold a scholarship because they have not the necessary maintenance, and they have, therefore, been obliged to give it up; but now as the Liverpool County Council provide the maintenance, no scholarships are thrown up, showing that there was no disinclination to allow the children to go on advancing in their education, but that it was the absolute necessity of the case which prevented. That raises a very grave question, how far you are to give assistance in these cases from the rates; but that the State should provide for children and undertake their maintenance, as well as to give them allowances in the nature of scholarships, is one of those serious questions which I would rather not go into on the present occasion. My noble Friend has spoken of assisted education in prospect. I must decline altogether to enter into an argument with regard to free, as distinguished from assisted education. I will only now say this, that nothing would induce me to go into that system of assisted education by grants if I thought it would interfere with the independent spirit of parents, or with the system of religious education in the country, which I hope will continue, as the whole education of the country begun upon it. My Lords, I do not know that I should in any way further the interests of education by entering into any further discussion on this question. If I had been addressed by my noble Friend in reference to any particular points of the Code, I should have been ready to give any explanation in my power; but that has not been the case. The discussion has been academic. It has been a discussion on the system. I do not think it has been a useful discussion, that it can serve any useful purpose, or that your Lordships, from the appearance of the Benches, take a very deep interest in it; and, therefore, I will for the present adjourn it, believing that next year we shall be able to discuss the subject with far greater facilities than we have at present. Great changes have been made in our system of education within the experience of my noble Friend, and I am quite sure he will look to the change in public opinion in dealing with any future system of education; but what we have all to do is to look at the matter in the concrete form in which it will be before us next year, and any discussion on those issues will, I hope, be far more valuable than any present expression of shadowy views. I hope, therefore, my noble Friend will not press to a Division this Resolution, which would pledge us to nothing, and could only throw us into confusion.

Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

EDUCATION.

"Return of all money voted by Parliament for education in the year ending April last, for

1. Public education, elementary and technical, in England, Scotland, and Ireland;
2. Science and Art Department, including agriculture;
3. Reformatory and industrial schools;
4. University colleges in the United Kingdom;
5. Military and naval colleges, academies, and schools:

Ordered to be laid before the House."—(*The Lord Norton.*)

CHILDREN'S LIFE INSURANCE BILL.
(No. 97.)

Select Committee on: The Lords following were named of the Committee:—

L. Chancellor.
E. Derby.
E. Spencer.
E. Harrowby.
E. Beauchamp.
E. Selborne.
L. Bp. Peterborough.
L. Bp. Ripon.
L. Clifford of Chudleigh.
L. Ker. (*M. Lothian.*)
L. Poltimore.
L. Brougham and Vaux.
L. Kinnaird.
L. Norton.
L. Herschell.
L. Thring.

The Committee to meet on Tuesday next, at Three o'clock, and to appoint their own Chairman.

KEW AND PETERSHAM VICARAGE BILL.—(No. 77.)

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 119.)

Read 3^{a} (according to order), and passed.

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 20th June, 1890.

QUESTIONS.

AMERICAN CATTLE.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if his attention has been called to the resolution passed on the 11th inst. by the United States Senate, calling on the President to negotiate for securing the modification of the present rules regarding the importation of American cattle into the United Kingdom; and if Her Majesty's Government will, in the declared absence of any other commercial lever for the reduction of hostile tariffs, require that the modification by America of the proposed prohibitive duties upon the products of the United Kingdom shall be a condition precedent to any negotiations whatever?

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. Fergusson, Manchester, N.E.): Restrictions upon the importation of cattle into the United Kingdom are based solely upon sanitary considerations, and have no regard to the fiscal system adopted by other countries.

GROCERS' LICENCES.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether grocers' licences are included in the Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Bill?

*The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Perhaps I may be allowed to answer the question. Grocers' licences are not included.

Major RASCH: Are other off-licences included?

*Mr. RITCHIE: No; there are no off-licences included in the Bill at all; but there are Amendments on the Paper asking the House to insert off-licences in the suspensory clauses of the Bill.

THE UNITED STATES TARIFF BILL.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, by the Tariff Bill passed by the House of Representatives of the United States *nemine contradicente*, and only awaiting the confirmation of the Senate and President to come into force, it is proposed to increase the duties on Sheffield pocket knives to 100 per cent. *ad valorem* from 50 per cent. as now, on Sheffield razors to 75 per cent. *ad valorem* from 50 per cent., on Sheffield carving and cooks' knives to 70 per cent. *ad valorem* from 35 per cent. as now, on Sheffield table cutlery to 50 per cent. instead of 35 per cent. as now, on Sheffield scissors and shears to 45 per cent. instead of 35 per cent. as now, on Birmingham breechloading guns from 80 per cent. to 100 per cent. *ad valorem*; and if analogous prohibitive duties are placed by the Bill upon other productions of Great Britain, and notably of South Wales, Lancashire, Glasgow, and Belfast?

Mr. H. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham): It is also posroped by the Tariff Bill to increase the duty on hops.

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: I cannot say offhand whether it is proposed to alter the duty on hops. In reply to the question on the Paper, I stated, in answer to a somewhat similar question on the 6th of May, that

> "It appears to be intended in the new Tariff Bill, submitted to the House of Representatives of the United States, on the whole to increase the Import Duties on Sheffield cutlery and edged tools from 50 to 100 per cent., though in some classes of edged tools a decrease seems to be intended. Her Majesty's Government are not in a position to judge what the amount of value will be."

The duties on the productions of the other districts named in the question will also be increased; but as in certain instances the basis of duty—namely, from *ad valorem* to weight—is altered, it is not prudent to hazard an opinion what the rate of increase will really be, nor whether the new rates will be "prohibitive duties." We must, however, assume that the effect will be to enhance the existing duties.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to give notice, in consequence of the answer of my right hon. Friend to this question, and also to my previous one, that as the American Tariff proposals will inflict great injury upon the trade of Sheffield and upon British traders and artisans in other parts of the country, I shall, if they are carried into operation, invite the House to consider, as soon as practicable, whether a free market should be longer given to the competing productions of a foreign State putting prohibitive duties upon British goods.

THE TELEPHONE.

Sir J. PULESTON (Devonport): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether any decision has been arrived at as to the action to be taken in reference to the telephone; and, if so, whether he can state it to the House?

*The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes, Cambridge University): I have to announce that the Government do not intend to give notice to purchase the undertakings of the telephone companies at the end of the first period of their licence, namely, the 31st of December next.

LLANDILO LOCAL BOARD.

Mr. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthen, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the conduct of the Local Board of Llandilo, Carmarthenshire, in expending a sum of money in a manner which they are not by law authorised to expend it; whether, on the 12th of June, in reply to a communication on the subject, he stated that the Board had acted illegally in authorising such expenditure, and that the decision of the Auditor in allowing it could not be sustained in law; whether he declined to interfere with such unauthorised expenditure by the Board, and such illegal decision of the Auditor; and whether he will re-consider the matter with a view to compelling the Board to act legally, and to directing the Auditor to disallow the amount?

*Mr. RITCHIE: The Local Government Board received an appeal from two ratepayers of Llandilo against a decision of the District Auditor in allowing £3 18s. 4d. in the accounts of the Local Board for the year ending Lady Day, 1889, in respect of the lighting and repair of a clock in the tower of Llandilo Church. The clock in question, it appears, was presented to the town in commemoration of Her Majesty's Jubilee, and is stated to have been placed in the Church tower because it was regarded as the most suitable place for it. The Board, upon the appeal against the disallowance, decided that as the clock, although presented to the town, was not the property of the Local Board they had no statutory authority for the expenditure which they had incurred, and the Board informed the Local Board and the District Auditor accordingly. The Board, however, considered that the circumstances were not such as to require that the members of the Local Board who had authorised the payment should be called upon personally to refund the sums in question, and they therefore in the exercise of the discretion vested in them by the statute allowed the charge to remain in the accounts. The Board's decision applies only to the expenditure in the year ended Lady Day, 1889. If future expenditure of the kind is incurred and charged on the rates it can be objected to at the audit, and will no doubt be disallowed by the Auditor.

MEETINGS IN TRAFALGAR SQUARE.

Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if the proclamation of the last Chief Commissioner of Police but one (Sir Charles Warren), relative to meetings in Trafalgar Square, still holds good after two years; if the police will receive orders to interfere with a meeting called in Trafalgar Square of Temperance Reformers, to discuss the Compensation Clauses; and if the Home Office will confer with the London County Council on this matter?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Matthews, Birmingham, E.): The Regulation issued by Sir C. Warren on the 18th of November, 1887, as to meetings in Trafalgar Square, still holds good, and I am advised that no re-issue is necessary. I have no information as to any intended meeting in the Square; but I must repeat what I stated in this House on the 15th of May, 1888, that until this Regulation is countermanded the duty of the police will be to prevent any public meeting being held in the Square, or in the adjacent thoroughfare.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the inhabitants of

London are entirely opposed to the holding of meetings in Trafalgar Square?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes; I believe that is so.

WAR OFFICE CONTRACTS—MATERIÉL.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if the quality of the projectiles recently obtained from abroad, by reason of the lower foreign tender, was equal to that proposed to be supplied from Sheffield at a somewhat higher price; and in what way it was or will be tested to show that the £14 per projectile saved in cost was not lost in the material and the excellence of Sheffield manufacture?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The tests for armour-piercing projectiles are laid down by the Ordnance Committee, and are the same wherever the shells may be manufactured. The contract is placed with a firm of great reputation, and the proofs have been quite satisfactory.

THE MILITIA.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether a considerable number of Militia battalions are still without musketry instructors; and, if so, what is the reason of the deficiency?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: There are 31 vacancies for musketry instructors. Candidates for commissions in the Army are not allowed to take these appointments; and most of the present subalterns are thus debarred. On the other hand, captains, though eligible, do not care to give up their company duties, hence the deficiency. During training, however, there is no difficulty in obtaining suitable officers, either from the line or from other Militia battalions.

PIRACY OF BRITISH COPYRIGHTS.

MR. QUILTER (Suffolk, Sudbury): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that a large quantity of American piracies of British copyright publications of engravings and etchings are being imported into this country, with the cognisance of Her Majesty's Customs, without any steps being taken to seize the same for their infringement of the Merchandise Marks Act, inasmuch as they bear no imprint showing where they were printed, in accordance with that Act; and whether steps will be taken to put a stop to a trade which is highly injurious to the interests of British Art?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): The Merchandise Marks Act does not require a statement of origin. The Commissioners of Customs inform me that they have no knowledge of the circumstances mentioned in the question, but will be glad to make inquiry if specific information is laid before them.

ENGINEER STUDENTS.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he can state the reason why the standard of qualification for the entry of engineer students was raised this year, and why, since the examination, that standard has been lowered to that of last year; and how many candidates attained the higher standard of qualification, and how many inferior candidates have been, or are to be, accepted below that standard?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The standard of qualification for the entry of engineer students was raised this year, because the advantages offered by the engineering branch of the Navy were such as to justify the Admiralty in believing that a more capable class than heretofore would compete. This expectation was justified in the main. This standard still remains in force; but, as I explained before, six candidates who came up to the previous standard were specially entered in order to complete the number of entries required for the year.

CAPE COLONY.

SIR DONALD CURRIE (Perthshire, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will be good enough to lay upon the Table of the House Copies of the letter from the Foreign Office, dated the 12th February, 1889, addressed to the Colonial Office, with the enclosure therein referred to; also, Sir Hercules Robinson's Despatch to Lord Knutsford, dated the 15th April, 1889 (No. 270), with the enclosure to the said letter, being a Minute of the

Prime Minister of the Cape, Sir Gordon Sprigg, addressed to the Governor of Cape Colony, and dated Cape Town, 9th April, 1889?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: These Papers form part of a correspondence, and cannot be given separately. It will be considered what Papers it is desirable to present to the House, and I will inform the hon. Member as soon as I can.

H.M.S. *EGERIA.*

Sir T. ESMONDE (Dublin Co., S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if the Report of the investigation into the circumstances of the mutiny on board H.M.S. *Egeria* will be laid before the House?

Lord G. HAMILTON: The Report of this inquiry has not yet been received at the Admiralty. It has never been customary to make such Reports public and there is no reason in the present instance to depart from that rule.

THE COMPOSITORS OF THE *SCOTTISH LEADER.*

Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been directed to the alleged action of the *Scottish Leader* newspaper in forcibly removing, by the aid of the police, all the compositors who were members of the Trade Union (on the 26th May 1890); if they acted in their legal right in so doing; and if the terms of agreement, which the men were compelled to sign, have been brought to his notice; and, if so, do they constitute a violation of the Truck Act? In putting this question, I wish to make a brief explanation. I believe this is the first occasion in which such a question has been asked in this House. These men consider themselves to have been ill-treated, and they come to Parliament as a last resource in order to guide the public in the matter. The compositors in question were employed on the *Scottish Leader* newspaper in Edinburgh, and they were dismissed for joining a Trades Union——

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is exceeding the limits of a question.

Mr. C. GRAHAM: Do I understand that I am at liberty to put my question?

*Mr. SPEAKER: The question on the Paper is perfectly in order.

Mr. C. GRAHAM: Then I beg to put it.

Mr. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Scotch Office and by the Chief Inspector of Factories that they have no information as to the facts referred to. Inquiries will, however, be made by both Departments without delay.

THE ANGLO-GERMAN AGREEMENT.

Mr. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Stevenson Road is itself the boundary between the English and German territories; whether the boundary is drawn with regard to the strategical requirements of any future railway or other means of communication connecting the Lakes Tanganyika and Nyassa; and whether there is already existing free transit for English goods across Damaraland; and, if not, whether, in view of the German extension permitted to the Zambesi, this matter will receive the attention of Her Majesty's Government?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: The Stevenson Road itself is not to be the boundary. The boundary is certainly intended to be drawn so as to facilitate communication by railway or otherwise between the two Lakes. Transit across Damaraland is subject to local imposts and conditions, as in other territories where no special agreement to the contrary exists; but negotiations are still proceeding with reference to that quarter, and the matter will be borne in mind.

Mr. O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the principle laid down in the Agreement with Germany in reference to East Africa, "that the Hinterland belongs of right to the Power holding the Coast Line," will be applied to the Portuguese possessions in Africa in cases of dispute between Great Britain and Portugal?

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): May I ask whether the same principle is to be admitted by Germany as applicable to the territory running east-wards from Walfish Bay to the corner of Bechuanaland?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: It is evident that the principle cannot be of universal application. Each case must be considered on its own merits.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Are the Government prepared to recommend the cession of some of the Channel Islands to France in return for concessions in respect of the Newfoundland Fisheries?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Heads of Agreement published in the *Berlin Official Gazette*, and reprinted in the *Times* of June 18th, represent the terms of Agreement with Germany so far as yet concluded; whether this Paper will be laid upon the Table of the House; and when other Papers relating to the negotiations with Germany as regards Africa, and as regards the proposed cession of Heligoland, will be circulated?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: Either in translation or transcription the text of the publication in question does not appear to be quite accurate. Lord Salisbury's Despatch, which has been laid on the Table, represents the outline of the proposed Agreement as in the hands of Her Majesty's Government. That outline is in course of development, but the details are subject to modification. It is, therefore, inexpedient to present anything further until the Convention has been completed.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is the intention of the Government to present to Parliament Papers relating to the Agreement with Germany for the settlement of African questions before the Bill for the surrender of Heligoland is introduced; and, if so, when these Papers will be presented?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: Papers relating to the Agreement will be presented to Parliament. I understand that it is intended to introduce the Bill for the cession of Heligoland in the House of Lords. The hon. Member's word surrender is inappropriate. The Papers cannot be completed until the negotiations are finished, but they will be presented as soon as possible.

Mr. BRYCE: Can the right hon. Gentleman give the House any idea when the negotiations are likely to reach a point that will enable a Bill to be introduced?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: I cannot say whether it will be possible to introduce a Bill before the Convention is signed.

Sir T. ESMONDE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if the Government will take steps to ascertain whether the people of Heligoland are satisfied to become Germanised?

*The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith, Strand, Westminster): We have ground for believing that the arrangements made will have removed the chief objections to the transfer; but we could hardly expect or wish that we or the Heligolanders should part without mutual regret.

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Mr. W. H. SMITH: We have ground for believing that the arrangements made will have removed the chief objections to the transfer; but we could hardly expect or wish that we or the Heligolanders should part without mutual regret.

Mr. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury whether he seriously intends to desert the loyal minority in Heligoland?

Mr. O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, before agreeing to the cession of Heligoland, Her Majesty's Government consulted the Naval Authorities on the actual or possible strategic value of the Island of Heligoland; and, if not, whether Her Majesty's Government will do so before further proceeding with the proposed cession?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: Yes, Sir.

Mr. O'KELLY: I am sorry I did not catch the drift of the answer. Will the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury not give a more intelligible answer to my question as to whether the Naval Authorities have been consulted, or whether they will be consulted in the future?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I am sorry that the answer I gave was not intelligible to the hon. Member. It was a distinct affirmative to the question put—that the Government had consulted the Authorities before they came to a decision on this question.

Mr. O'KELLY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that General Sir Andrew Clarke has publicly denounced the cession of Heligoland?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: Very likely, Sir; he has denounced a great many things.

SAMOA.

Sir T. ESMONDE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs why the recent Treaty has not yet been put into force at Samoa, and when it will be?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: The necessary steps have been taken by Her Majesty's Government and the Governments of the other contracting Powers, but some time is required for making the local arrangements.

THE CASE OF CHARLES JACKSON.

Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if his attention has been directed to the case of Charles Jackson, formerly constable under the Metropolitan Board of Works, and dismissed for bringing certain accusations against the officials of the Board of Guardians of Wandsworth and Clapham?

*Mr. RITCHIE: Several letters have been addressed to the Local Government Board by Charles Jackson. I have no information as to the circumstances under which he was dismissed from his employment under the Metropolitan Board of Works; but in the letters which have been received from him he makes no allegation that he was dismissed in consequence of bringing accusations against the officials of the Board of Guardians. He has been an inmate of the workhouse of the Wandsworth and Clapham Union, and has made certain complaints. Copies of his communications have been forwarded to the Guardians.

CHINESE GAMBLING HOUSES IN HONG KONG.

Mr. GROTRIAN (Hull, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies if he is aware that it is reported from Hong Kong that Chinese gambling houses are on the increase there; and, if so, whether the Government can adopt any means for their suppression?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Baron H. de Worms, Liverpool, East Toxteth): No Report on the subject appears to have reached the Colonial Office, but inquiry will be made.

THE COUNTY COUNCILS AND THE LOCAL TAXATION BILL.

Captain VERNEY (Bucks, N.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will inform the House how many County Councils have passed and forwarded to him resolutions in favour of the Compensation Clauses of the Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Duties Bill, and how many resolutions condemning them?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square): So far as I can find—and a special eye has been kept on communications from County Councils in the mass of correspondence I have received—two County Councils have sent me resolutions against the so-called Compensation Clauses of the Local Taxation Bill, and one County Council, while expressing a general approval of the Local Taxation Bill, has declined to offer an opinion one way or another on the clauses to which the hon. Member refers.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): Does the answer of the right hon. Gentleman apply to Corporations as well as County Councils?

Mr. GOSCHEN: I have answered the question on the Paper, which relates to County Councils.

GRANTS FOR SCIENCE.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he has received remonstrances from the principal Educational Authorities and Managers of higher elementary schools in England and Scotland against Article 40 of the Science and Art Department, which excludes scholars in public elementary schools from being henceforward examined or earning grants in science;

whether he has seen the statement of the National Association for the Promotion of Technical Education, which describes this circular "as one of the most serious blows which have been struck for some years at the development of scientific and technical education"; and whether, having regard to the feeling with which the circular has been received, he will cause it to be withdrawn?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): Representations have reached the Department that the effect of the circular in question will be detrimental to science instruction in many schools, and, although I am not prepared to endorse the language in which the circular has been described, I have already stated in answer to a question that this matter is under consideration, with a view to a serious modification of the Minute.

NAVAL UNIFORM.

CAPTAIN PRICE (Devonport): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what alterations in Naval Officers' uniform have been sanctioned; and whether, for the convenience of officers, he will cause such to be made known without delay?

LORD G. HAMILTON: No alterations in the established uniform of Naval Officers have yet been sanctioned by the Admiralty. A Committee of Naval Officers, under the presidency of Admiral his Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, is at present inquiring into the subject, but I cannot state when they will be ready to make their Report.

THE CIVIL SERVICE.

MR. J. KELLY (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the intention of the Treasury to secure uniformity as to the regulations with reference to leave and sick leave throughout the Civil Service, paragraph 9 of the Order in Council of 21st March, 1890, will be made to apply to all clerks in the Second Division; and, if so, whether the annual holidays referred to in paragraph 8 of such Order in Council are to be subject to deductions for sick leave under Departmental regulations which were in force prior to the issue of the Order in Council?

MR. GOSCHEN: Clause 9 applies to all clerks of the Second Division, and I think the terms of it are sufficiently clear to require no further interpretation.

CHARGE AGAINST AN ENGLISH CONSUL.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has observed the following statement in the *Primiero de Saniero* of 12th June, an Oporto daily newspaper, respecting a serious crime alleged to have been practised in Shiré by the English Consul: (translation)

> "Persons who have arrived by the African Packet, which also brought the protest of the Governor of Quillimane, confirm the facts. One of the two Sepoys was shot against a tree. The other was beaten to death with sticks at Chicomo, where Consul Buchanan had recently hoisted the English flag . . . . The two Sepoys had been sent on a mission to Inhacuana Lundo by Jose Cardero, Governor of Massangire . . . The two Sepoys were made prisoners when crossing the river, and were murdered;"

and whether he has received any information in respect to this transaction; and, if so, will he communicate it to the House?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The latest Despatches from the Acting Consul mention no such occurrences, but inquiries are being made.

"SHARP *V.* WAKEFIELD."

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I had intended to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will lay upon the Table, as Parliamentary Papers, the following documents in connection with the licensing case of "Sharp *v.* Wakefield;" the statement of the case, and the judgments delivered in the Court of Appeal? but at the request of the right hon. Gentleman I will postpone it.

THE RUNNING DOWN OF THE *OSPREY*.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will instruct the Public Prosecutor to act, in reference to the verdict of manslaughter returned by the Coroner's Jury, 9th June, in the case of the running down of the smack *Osprey* by the steamship *Henry Morton*?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: The Director of Public Prosecutions undertook the prosecution in the *Osprey* case on the 13th inst., and procured the committal of the defendant for trial on a charge of manslaughter on the 18th inst., and will conduct the case at the ensuing Maidstone Assizes.

IRISH LIGHT RAILWAYS.

Mr. DALTON (Donegal, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether General Sankey, in his recent visit to Donegal to decide on the fittest route for a light railway in North West Donegal, was officially accompanied and advised by a Mr. Edmund Murphy, J.P., an official of the Board of Works; whether he is aware that Mr. Murphy is a Grand Juror of County Donegal, and in that capacity took a prominent part at the last Assizes in advocating one of the competing lines proposed for that district; and whether, though himself an official of the Board of Works, he was one of a deputation that waited on the Board of Works in connection with this railway line; whether, as a matter of fact, the line advocated by Mr. Murphy, and presumably recommended by him to General Sankey, meets with general opposition from the people of North West Donegal; and whether he has sanctioned the practice of officials of the Board of Works taking part officially in securing the adoption of a line of railway in which they are personally interested; and, if not, whether he will convey an expression of his opinion to the Board of Works for the guidance of their officials?

Mr. JACKSON: I am informed that General Sankey at Easter paid a visit to Donegal for the purpose of informing himself as to the best route. He was accompanied by Mr. Murphy, but there was no official character attached to the visit. I am not able to enter into details with regard to the question.

Mr. W. REDMOND: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the last part of the question, whether he has sanctioned the practice of officials of the Board of Works taking part officially in securing the adoption of a line of railway in which they are personally interested?

Mr. JACKSON: No, Sir. I have neither sanctioned it nor said anything about it. I am not aware, as a matter of fact, whether Mr. Murphy is an official of the Board of Works. I take it that it was the duty of General Sankey to avail himself of the resources or knowledge of anyone who was capable of giving him information.

Mr. W. REDMOND: The hon. Gentleman says he is not aware whether Mr. Murphy is an official of the Board of Works or not. I regret that that answer will render it necessary that the question should be repeated, because the crucial point is whether Mr. Murphy was an official or not.

Mr. JACKSON: In my judgment it does not affect the question at all.

Mr. DALTON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he can give any further information as to the cause of the delay in granting the sum of £116,000, recommended so strongly by the Light Railway Commissioners, and approved of unanimously by the Grand Jury of County Donegal at the last Spring Assizes, in favour of the Stranorlar and Glenties line; whether it is a fact that no opposition to the proposed line has been received from any quarter; and whether, in view of the Board of Works' Report—

> "That the merits of the proposed Light Railway were superior from all points of view as compared with any other Light Railway which might be constructed opening up communication through the same district as the proposed line,"

the works will be proceeded with without delay?

Mr. JACKSON: I regret that I am not in a position at the present moment to make any statement in regard to this line. Any declaration of the decision of the Treasury might seriously prejudice the negotiations now going on.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Can the right hon. Gentleman give the House any idea how soon the Government will be able to approach the question?

Mr. JACKSON: I hope the House will be content for the present with the answer I have given. Negotiations are going on with regard to these lines, and I am doing the best I can to bring about a satisfactory arrangement, so that I may be able to make an announcement to the House. I can assure the hon. and learned Member and the House that, as far as I am concerned, no unnecessary delay will take place. I am endeavouring to make arrangements that will be to the interest of the counties through which these lines will pass.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Is it not the fact that all the arrangements have been before the Treasury for a period of six months? I do not say whether the time has been too long or too short; but they have been under consideration for a considerable period. May I hope that before the end of the Session, or before the Irish Estimates are brought on—which may not be until December—the arrangements will be completed?

Mr. JACKSON: There will be no delay on my part.

Mr. COX (Clare, E.): Does not this line run through a large portion of an estate that is merely waste land, but for which the owner asks for compensation?

Mr. JACKSON: I have no knowledge.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): Will the final arrangements in regard to these lines be made before the matter is brought before the House? If so, what use will there be in bringing the matter before the House at all?

Mr. JACKSON: I hope that final arrangements will be made shortly, but it will be very difficult to make them unless the Government assume the entire responsibility.

Mr. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Treasury are prepared to sanction the grant recommended by the Board of Works for the construction of the Baltimore Extension Light Railway, and what is the cause of the delay in proceeding with the undertaking which passed the Grand Jury of the County of Cork at the Summer Assizes last year?

The SECRETARY to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Long, Wilts, Devizes): My right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury has asked me to state that negotiations are going on which he hopes will result in the making of the railway.

POOR'S RATE IN LONDONDERRY.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what is the amount of Poor's Rate due in respect of holdings valued under £4 5s., for which the immediate lessors are liable under 1 and 2 Vic. c. 56, in the Union of Londonderry?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): The Local Government Board are informed by the Clerk of the Londonderry Union that the total amount of Poor's Rate due by immediate lessors in respect of holdings in the Union valued at and under £4 per annum is £13 14s. 5d.

POLICE SHADOWING IN IRELAND.

Mr. COX: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. John Malone, cattle buyer for a Glasgow firm of salesmasters, has been systematically followed by policemen when attending to his busines at fairs in the County Clare; whether he will state the reason for this proceeding; and if Mr. Malone's claim for compensation in consequence of loss incurred by reason of this police shadowing will receive the favourable consideration of the Government?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: John Malone was watched at certain fairs because there was reason to believe that he was a boycotting agent. I am not aware, nor do I believe, that he was prevented from doing any legitimate business.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Does the right hon. Gentleman act on the principle that because a man is suspected of ruining other people's business his own business ought to be ruined also?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have explained that I do not believe this man's business has been ruined.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): May I repeat a question which I put the other day? Is a permanent record kept to justify a responsible authority in ordering a particular individual to be shadowed?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I imagine that there are records kept in all cases of shadowing, but I must ask the hon. Gentleman to put the question on the Paper?

CASTLEBLANEY UNION.

Mr. BLANE (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what is the amount of Poor's Rate due by the immediate lessors in respect of holdings valued at £4 and under in the Union of Castleblaney?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Local Government Board are informed by the Clerk of the Castleblaney Union that at present only one immediate lessor in the Union owes Poor's Rate in respect of holdings valued at and under £4 per annum, the amount due being £4 6s. 1d. Payment has been promised.

Mr. BLANE: As the holding is so very small will the Local Government Board insist on payment being made?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot answer that question.

LAND COMMISSION—ROSCOMMON COUNTY.

Mr. O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether complaints have reached him that, although Mr. Stephen Connor, of Daughloon, Strokestown Union, County Roscommon, served his landlord, Mr. J. H. Mahon, with a notice to have a fair rent fixed on the 11th October, 1887, no hearing of the case has yet been had?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners report that the facts are substantially as stated. The application, however, is being inserted in the list for hearing at Strokestown on the 24th July.

PPOINTMENT OF CATHOLIC MAGISTRATES IN IRELAND.

Mr. MATTHEW KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the Vice Lieutenant of County Tyrone has rejected the prayer of a Memorial, very extensively signed by the principal inhabitants of Dromore and vicinity, asking for the appointment of Mr. P. M'Laughlin to the Commission of the Peace; if the refusal to appoint Mr. M'Laughlin is due to the fact that he is a Catholic; if, at the same time, the Lord Chancellor has appointed an additional Protestant (Mr. Frederick Guy) to the Dromore Bench of Magistrates, although it has been recently brought to his notice that there are already nine Protestant and only one Catholic Magistrate in the district; and if he is aware that the Catholic population in the district largely preponderates?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that a Memorial in favour of the appointment to the Magistracy of the County Tyrone of Mr. M'Laughlin, a farmer residing in the Dromore District, was presented to the Vice Lieutenant of the County, and was not acceded to, but the refusal to appoint Mr. M'Laughlin was not on the ground of his religion, as the Vice Lieutenant is always glad to recommend Roman Catholics when properly qualified persons of that religious denomination are brought to his notice. The Vice Lieutenant, in recommending the appointment of Mr. Frederick Andrew Guy (who is a Presbyterian), informed the Lord Chancellor that Mr. Guy was recommended to him by persons of every religion and class in the district, and that, having inquired into his qualifications, he found him to be well-fitted to be a Magistrate. I have no information as to the relative proportion of the several religious denominations in the district.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): What are the grounds of the refusal?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot say; it is a matter which rests in the discretion of the Vice Lieutenant.

Mr. M. KENNY: I beg to give notice that I will raise the question again.

Mr. WELDON, J.P.

Mr. FINUCANE (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with regard to the case of J. Weldon, J.P., Ashill, Kilmallock, County Limerick, who assaulted a cattle dealer from Tipperary, at Knocklong Fair, in October last, and in whose case, at the last Spring Assizes in Limerick, a Jury awarded to the said cattle dealer a sum of £50 and costs, whether the attention of the Lord Chancellor will be directed to the conduct of Mr. Weldon?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand the Lord Chancellor has considered this case, and taking the circumstances into account sees no reason for further action.

Mr. SEXTON: What were the circumstances which, in the opinion of the Lord Chancellor, induced him to treat this case of assault lightly?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It is not my duty to explain, but I believe it was found that the facts of the case were of a very trivial nature.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Was not Mr. White, of Glengaruff, removed from the Commission of the Peace when he assaulted a man in the same way, although it was only a case of debtor and creditor?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The fact that it was a case of debtor and creditor may have made the circumstances more important.

BOYCOTTING.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in reference to the prosecution of Patrick Keefe, William Kent, Thomas Kent, George Mulcahy, John Tuohy, Pat Walsh, John Donovan, and James Donovan, of Coolagowan, Cork, on a charge of boycotting, whether he is aware that a large number of prosecutions and imprisonments (including that of Father O'Dwyer and a number of respectable farmers in the locality) have already taken place in connection with charges arising out of the alleged taking of this same farm at Towermore; and whether it is open to Mr. Robert Browne, the present holder of this farm, to bring these prosecutions under the Criminal Law and Procedure Act; and, if so, why have the Local Constabulary Authorities gone to the expense and trouble of instituting this large number of prosecutions when it lay within the power of the private individual concerned to move in the matter?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that there were three previous prosecutions in connection with offences committed in consequence of the farm having been taken by a new tenant. The boycotting conspiracy in this case was so determined, and its results were so serious, as to affect in a most prejudicial manner the peace of the whole district, and was carried on so generally as to be even introduced into the Roman Catholic Chapel, where, for over two months, the most disgraceful scenes were enacted Sunday after Sunday. It is open to any person to prosecute for any offence committed against himself. But in prosecutions for criminal conspiracy, unlawful assembly, and all prosecutions where the general public peace is involved, the prosecutions are invariably instituted by the Crown.

Mr. FLYNN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that more than 20 persons, including a Roman Catholic priest, have suffered terms of imprisonment for refusing to work with or deal with particular individuals?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I must ask for notice of that question.

LAND COMMISSION—VALUERS' REPORTS.

Mr. M. HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether he will state what the present practice of the Irish Land Commission is as regards obtaining the Report of an official valuer on the hearing of fair rent appeals; whether such Report is now obtained by the Land Commission on their own Motion in all or in any, and, if so, in what cases, and at whose expense; and whether either of the litigant parties can, on application, cause such a Report to be procured on payment of any fee or without payment?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden, Dublin University): The Land Commissioners report that in appeal cases where the appellant has stated that the appeal is brought merely with reference to the holding for the purposes of rent, the Land Commissioners, so far as is possible, direct valuations to be made by the Appeal Court valuers prior to the hearing of the appeal. The Commissioners obtain each valuation on their own motion, and in such cases and for such sittings as they consider most desirable. The valuations are obtained without expense to the parties. When obtained, the result is forthwith communicated to the appellant free of charge. Either party can obtain a detailed copy of the Valuer's Report for 1s. The valuer communicates the date of his intended inspection to both landlord and tenant. Both prior to, and at the hearing, if either party makes it manifest to the Commissioners that special circumstances exist which render a valuation desirable, the Commissioners, when it is possible to do so, order a valuation to be made.

Mr. M. HEALY: Do I understand that there has been a violation of the Act in all cases where a valuer has been employed?

Mr. MADDEN: No, Sir; where a question of value arises, the Commissioners have power to appoint a valuer. It is not absolutely imperative.

POSTAL ACCOMMODATION IN GALWAY BAY.

Mr. FOLEY (Galway, Connemara): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware that a population of over 4,000 people, inhabiting a group of islands at the mouth of Galway Bay, are altogether unprovided with postal accommodation, the group including the islands of Garamna, Littermullen, and Littermore, with other smaller islands; whether he is aware that among the inhabitants of these islands are two Roman Catholic Clergymen, two Poor Law Guardians, 11 National School Teachers, and a considerable number of shopkeepers and other residents, who feel it a great hardship in having no postal communication with the mainland; and, whether in view of the fact that the cost to the Government of a three day service, with which the people would be satisfied (including an office on one of the islands), would only be £12 16s. a year, while smaller communities in the immediate neighbourhood are provided with a daily post at more than quadruple the amount, he will consider the possibility of granting the request for this postal service?

*Mr. RAIKES: In reply to the hon. Member, I am glad to be able to state that I have sanctioned the establishment of a post three days a week from Carraroe to Tiernee, an arrangement which I understand will be acceptable to the inhabitants of the islands referred to by the hon. Member.

CASE OF MR. H. D. FISHER, *MUNSTER EXPRESS*.

Mr. RICHARD POWER (Waterford): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. H. D. Fisher, of Waterford, has been imprisoned for the publication of reports of National League meetings in the *Munster Express*, although it was proved at the trial that he did not sign the certificate of registration as publisher, and no evidence was given that he was the editor or publisher of that newspaper?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that, notwithstanding the circumstance mentioned by the hon. Member, ample evidence was produced that Mr. Fisher was printer and publisher of the newspaper mentioned.

Mr. SEXTON: Was there evidence forthcoming that Mr. Fisher signed the certificate? Will he indicate what the nature of the evidence was which fixed him with the responsibility?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No Sir; I cannot. If there is any doubt as to the legality of the conviction, it is possible for the person aggrieved to obtain a remedy.

Mr. W. REDMOND: Was the charge against Mr. Fisher that he had published reports of branches of the Irish National League which had not been attempted to be suppressed by the right hon. Gentleman?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. Gentleman requires details, I must ask him to put the question on the Paper, but I have no doubt that the reports were of a criminal nature.

THE BALLYMENA GUARDIANS.

Mr. M'CARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the report in the *Belfast News Letter* of the 17th instant, of the proceedings at the last meeting of the Board of Guardians at Ballymena, County Antrim; and whether, considering the serious charges preferred against the master and other officials of the workhouse there, he will direct a sworn inquiry to be held for the purpose of investigating these charges?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Local Government Board inform me that they had this matter before them, and that, in accordance with their usual practice, they purpose in the first instance to forward to the master and matron a copy of the complaints made against them, and to require them to furnish an explanation in writing. The Board will then be in a position to determine whether a sworn inquiry should be held.

THE LAND PURCHASE ACTS.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the application for advances up to the end of March last, under the Land Purchase Acts of 1885 and 1888, amounted to £8,708,808; for what sum applications have been lodged between the end of March and 15th June; and, if the average of applications per month be maintained, at what date the funds at the disposal of the Land Commission would be exhausted?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners report that the applications under the Land Purchase Acts to the end of March last amounted to £8,708,808. The amount of advances applied for between the end of March and the 16th of June, inclusive, was £257,356. The total amount of advances applied for to the 16th of June, 1890, was £8,966,164, from which is to be deducted for applications refused £930,571. This leaves a balance of £1,964,407 available for future applications. Assuming that the amounts sanctioned will continue per month at the average of the past, which, however, must be mere conjecture, the funds in question at the disposal of the Land Commission would be exhausted in about 14 months.

THE ACCIDENT TO THE *CITY OF ROME*.

MR. WEBB (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, with reference to the *City of Rome* having struck the Fastnet Rock on Sunday, 8th June, about 5 a.m., whether, although daylight, the lamp of the lighthouse was alight; and whether it was only after the vessel struck that the guncotton fog signalling apparatus on the rock was put into operation?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The Board of Trade have directed an inquiry to be held into the circumstances attending this casualty. Until the Report of the Court has been received I am unable to express any opinion in the matter.

CASE OF MR. M'ENERY.

MR. O'KEEFFE (Limerick City): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if, on the occasion of a professional visit by Mr. O'Meara, solicitor, to Mr. M'Enery in Tullamore Gaol last week, Mr. O'Meara was compelled to hold his interview in an open corridor, and in the presence of a warder; and whether, on return to his cell, Mr. M'Enery was subjected to a searching of his person?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Governor of the prison reports that the interview was held in the usual place and in the usual way. There was no departure from the usual practice, nor was any objection taken at the time.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): How is it that Mr. M'Enery is unable to have an interview with his professional adviser except in the presence of a warder, whereas, in another case, Mr. Shannon, for the *Times*, was able to see prisoners alone?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Speaking from recollection I do not think the hon. Gentleman has stated the facts correctly, but I have answered the question on the Paper.

MR. MAC NEILL: Perhaps the Home Secretary will say what the practice is in England.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That ought to be made the subject of a specific question.

THE POTATO BLIGHT.

SIR T. ESMONDE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the potato blight has appeared in the South of Ireland; and, if so, whether the Government intend taking any action in connection with it?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have received no report on the subject, and I must ask the hon. Gentleman to put down the question for another day.

IRISH POST OFFICE OFFICIALS.

SIR T. ESMONDE: I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he will dismiss any Post Office official or *employé* in Ireland who joins the Postmen's Union?

MR. RAIKES: No postman in England has been dismissed on the grounds suggested by the hon. Baronet, and I certainly shall not follow a different practice in Ireland from that prevailing in England.

THE LEASEHOLDERS (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the wide-spread demand among the leaseholders of Ireland in favour of the Leaseholders (Ireland) Bill, and of the postponement of the Land Purchase Bill, he will afford facilities for the passage of the Leaseholders (Ireland) Bill into law this Session?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; apart from other objections I think a conclusive objection is the present state of public business.

EDUCATIONAL INSPECTORS.

MR. HARRISON (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether there is any rule of the Commissioners of National Education compelling District Inspectors, when examining for results, to mark the answers of the pupils secretly, so as to prevent either teacher or pupils from observing the marks recorded for each pupil in each specific subject; and whether, if there be no such rule, he is prepared to represent to the Commissioners of National Education the advisability of issuing general instructions to their Inspectors to have the marks recorded in the marking paper in presence of the teacher and pupils, as a guarantee of the good faith and impartiality of their marking?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Commissioners of National Education report that there is no such rule as that indicated in the question. The marks of the oral portion of the examination are recorded in the marking paper in the schoolroom as the examination proceeds, and, as a rule, in the presence of the teacher; those of the written part cannot be entered until the exercises of the pupils have been read. All the marks of the oral and written portions appear on the examination roll, which is sent to the school and retained there. The Commissioners do not deem further instructions to Inspectors on the point necessary.

DAMAGES AGAINST AN IRISH CONSTABLE.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that in an action before Judge Gibson and a special jury, in Dublin on the 18th instant, Rev. M. B. Kennedy, C.C., Meelin, County Cork, obtained a verdict for £100 damages and costs against Sergeant Hyde, R.I.C., Meelin, for trespass, and assault on the reverend plaintiff; whether the Constabulary Authorities will take note of the conduct of this policeman as detailed in the trial; and have the Constabulary Authorities or the Government paid the expenses of this constable in whole or in part or do they intend so to do?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe that a new trial will be applied for. I cannot, therefore, enter into particulars in regard to the case.

MR. FLYNN: Will the Government pay the £100, and from what source will it be paid?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot reply until the whole case is settled.

CLARE INFIRMARY.

DR. KENNY (Cork, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that last year, when the two honourable Members for Clare (Mr. Cox and Mr. Jordan) attended at Ennis in response to a summons sent to them by the Registrar of the Clare Infirmary, of which institution they are Governors, to take part in the election of a physician to the infirmary, they were shadowed by the police during their entire stay in Ennis, and that during the entire time the election above mentioned was proceeding, a police guard was stationed in the immediate vicinity of the infirmary; and whether he can state by whose direction the police acted in the manner above described?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not had sufficient notice of the question, and must ask the hon. Member to defer it.

MR. C. P. REDMOND.

MR. P. J. POWER (Waterford, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. C. P. Redmond, editor of the *Waterford News*, has been sentenced by Messrs. Considine and Irwin at Waterford on June 6th, to three months' imprisonment for publishing a resolution of the Kilgobenet Branch of the Irish National League; whether Mr. Redmond was sentenced to a further term of imprisonment for publishing in another issue of the *Waterford News* another resolution of the same branch; whether Mr. Redmond was convicted on a third charge, stated by the Court to be a graver offence than the other charges, to 14 days' imprisonment, and ordered at the expiration of that period to enter into security himself in the sum of £200, and two sureties of £100 each, to be of good behaviour, or in default to go to prison for four months; whether there is an appeal from the last sentence; whether the Magistrates refuse to impose a sentence which would give a right of appeal; whether the same course of refusing an appeal has not been adopted recently by the same Magistrates in the case of Mr. Fisher, editor of the *Munster Express;* and whether he is aware that every decision of Messrs. Considine and Irwin brought before Judge Waters has been reversed by him?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Mr. C. P. Redmond was sentenced, as stated in the question, to three months' imprisonment for using intimidation towards three persons by means of a published report of the proceedings of the Kilgobenet branch of the Irish National League, which appeared in the issue of his newspaper of April 5, 1890. He was also sentenced on the 7th of June to a like term of imprisonment for using intimidation towards three other persons by means of a similar publication in the issue of his newspaper of April 12, 1890. This sentence was ordered to run concurrently with the previous one, as the two publications were connected with the one matter. The order mentioned of 14 days' imprisonment and to find sureties was made on the same date for using intimidation towards Matthew Walsh by means of a published report of the proceedings of the Dungarvan Branch of the Irish National League, which appeared in the issue of his newspaper of April 26, 1890. The case was a very bad one; I presume the character of the sentence was modified by the fact that on the same day the same man had been sentenced to imprisonment for three months. There is no appeal, nor does there appear to have been any doubt connected either with the law or the facts of the case which rendered an appeal necessary. I believe there has been a difference of opinion on more than one occasion between the County Court Judge in question and the Magistrates; but in every case where the difference came up for decision by the High Court, that Judge was proved to be wrong, and the Magistrates to be right. Matthew Walsh has for a long time been subjected to boycotting and intimidation, and the Magistrates stated the report was of a most intimidatory character, and the worst that had come before them; that if they had had cognisance of this offence before the previous cases they would have felt it their duty to impose a very severe sentence; but as they had already sentenced Mr. Redmond at the same sittings to imprisonment, and desired rather to restrain such conduct than to punish the defendant, they would not make a cumulative order, but exercise their preventive jurisdiction. There is no appeal from the last sentence, but if it was made without any sufficient evidence it can be reviewed by the Superior Courts. The Magistrates refused to alter the order on the ground, which was not disputed, that there was no legal point involved, and also on the ground that in a similar case the Queen's Bench Division had recently held on a case stated that there was ample evidence to justify the conviction. An appeal was refused in the case referred to for similar reasons as in Mr. Redmond's case.

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I ask the Chief Secretary whether, when the Criminal Law Amendment Bill (Ireland) was before the House, he did not distinctly promise that there should be an appeal in every case?

MR. W. REDMOND: May I also ask in regard to one of the Magistrates—Mr. Considine—if it is not the fact that he is completely without legal training of any kind? When under cross-examination as to his legal qualifications did he not admit, in the most candid manner, that his only qualification was that he had kept two dinner terms in the Inner Temple?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir. I am not aware that that is the fact. With regard to the allegation that I could have control over the judicial acts of the Magistrates, I beg to give it—and not for the first time—an emphatic contradiction.

MR. CLANCY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the practice of giving short sentences by the Irish Magistrates in order to prevent appeal began immediately after a speech he made at Birmingham?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; I am not aware of it.

THE CLANRICARDE TENANTRY.

Mr. SHEEHY (Galway, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Head Constable Judge and the police in Portumna have been going amongst the Clanricarde tenantry with a list of the tenants who they say paid their rents; who supplied this list to Head Constable Judge; and by whose orders this constable and the police under him are doing this duty of bailiff for Lord Clanricarde?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: A full Report has not yet reached me. I must ask the hon. Member to defer the question.

CASHEL.

Mr. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland by what authority, and for what reason, groups of policemen hung about the entrance to the Town Hall of Cashel at the time appointed for the last meeting of the Municipal Commissioners, and took down the name of each Commissioner as he entered?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that it is not the case that there were groups of police as alleged. Only four men were on duty at the time; of these, two were on ordinary beat duty, and two who happened to be on patrol and who observed those who entered and left the Town Hall, but no note was taken as alleged.

FLASHING SIGNALS—ADMIRAL COLOMB'S INVENTION.

Mr. BALLANTINE (Coventry): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether any decision has been arrived at by the Treasury with regard to the claim of Admiral Colomb for compensation in respect of his invention of flashing signals?

Mr. JACKSON: I am sorry I am not able to answer the hon. Gentleman, who has been good enough at my request to postpone this question; but I hope in a few days to give him a definite answer.

THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER OF POLICE.

Mr. W. LOWTHER (Westmoreland, Appleby): I beg to ask the Home Secretary whether anything has been decided with regard to the appointment of the new Chief Commissioner?

Mr. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea): On this subject I wish to ask whether it is true, as stated in yesterday's *Standard*, that there is reason to believe that through the action of Lord Salisbury the differences between Mr. Matthews and the Chief Commissioner of Police will be adjusted, and in that event Mr. Monro's resignation will be withdrawn?

*Mr. MATTHEWS: In answer to my hon. Friend, I have to say that Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to approve of the appointment of Sir Edward Bradford as Commissioner of Police, to the office just vacated by the resignation of Mr. Monro. I need say nothing to the House of the distinguished career and services of Sir E. Bradford.

Mr. C. GRAHAM: Is Sir E. Bradford an old military officer or not?

Mr. O. V. MORGAN: Was Sir E. Bradford the gentleman who has been a distinguished Resident and Representative in Jeypore?

Mr. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): Can the right hon. Gentleman state what experience Sir E. Bradford has had with regard to the control of civil bodies responsible for order?

*Mr. MATTHEWS: Sir E. Bradford has had a wide and varied experience in many offices of the Public Service. At the present moment he is employed in the India Office. He was for some years Governor General's Agent for Rajpootana. In that capacity he conducted the whole military and civil service of the district, and rendered most valuable services to his country. He has also been for many years an officer in the Madras army.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Has he ever been in charge of any police force such as we have in the Metropolis?

*Mr. MATTHEWS: I am not quite sure what the hon. Member means.

Mr. C. GRAHAM: Among Europeans.

*Mr. MATTHEWS: He has commanded the police, as I have stated.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: I wish to ask whether the services of this gentleman have always been employed in Asiatic countries, and not among people of English race.

*Mr. MATTHEWS: No, Sir; he has been employed in this country in connection with the India Office since 1887.

Mr. J. ROWLANDS: Has he in the India Office been connected with bodies which can at all be considered to have such functions to perform as the police of the Metropolis have?

*Mr. MATTHEWS: I believe Sir E. Bradford to be, both by character and experience, thoroughly qualified.

NOTICE OF MOTION.

THE NEW STANDING ORDER.

Mr. WHITBREAD (Bedford): I beg to give notice that when the Leader of the House moves the proposed Standing Order [Mr. W. H. SMITH here rose, but Mr. WHITBREAD declined to give way] for carrying over Bills from one Session to another, it is my intention to move as an Amendment—

> "That the Motion for a Standing Order involving so great a change in the usages of Parliament and the Constitution ought not to be considered until the House, agreeably to former practice, has had the advantage of the previous consideration of the subject by a Committee of this House."

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I was anxious to save the hon. Gentleman the trouble of giving notice of his Amendment. I have considered the suggestion which was made in the notice of the Amendment given by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian during the past week, and the many suggestions which have reached me from hon. Friends in different parts of the House, and it was my intention to give notice of the following Resolution:—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire whether, by means of an abridged form of procedure, or otherwise, the consideration of Bills partly considered in this House could be facilitated in the ensuing Session of the same Parliament."

I propose to move this Resolution on Monday next, in the hope and belief that it will be accepted by the House in the spirit in which it is offered, as a step towards the consideration of a question which is of great importance to the House itself, and that the Debate will be postponed until we receive the Report of the Committee. I trust that I shall have the support of the right hon. Gentleman opposite.

MR. LONG AND THE BREWING INTEREST.

Mr. STOREY (Sunderland): With your permission, Sir, I beg to ask the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board a question of which I have given him private notice; and as the matter is one that is personal both to him and to myself, I trust the House will allow me very briefly to recall the circumstances. On Tuesday night last I named the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board as one whose vote I asked should be disallowed because he was pecuniarily interested in the matter affected by the Bill. I was not allowed to make the Motion, and the hon. Member rose and, as I understood him, stated to the House that his only connection with the matter was that he had lent his brother money, and that he was not a shareholder in a brewery. I say that is what I understood him to say. A great many other hon. Members on this side of the House also understood the same, and I am bound to say, having examined a very large number of the principal newspapers of the country, I find that, almost without exception, that was the idea conveyed to them. For instance, the *Times*—if that can be called a principal newspaper—says: "Mr. Long and Sir M. Hicks Beach have denied that they were interested in any brewery."

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member, but I am bound to say that what occurred took place in Committee, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees is the sole judge of it. I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman intends to make any Motion, but if he does I think it ought to be in Committee, provided that fresh circumstances have occurred that would justify the re-opening of the question. If the hon. Member is going to ask a question he would be in order.

Mr. STOREY: That is what I am going to do—to ask a question. I am bound to say that since the hon. Gentleman made his statement in Committee he has sent a letter to the *Times*, in which he states that he did inform the Committee that he was a shareholder in a brewery company. I, for one, accept that statement. My questions to the hon. Gentleman are these: (1.) Was he not one of the founders of the Bath Brewery Company? (2.) Does not his name appear on the Memorandum of Association? (3.) Was he not, and is he not now, one of the directors and chairman of the company, receiving the usual fees? (4.) Has he not all along been, and is he not now, an ordinary shareholder, entitled to his proportion of the profits of the company, and has not the said Brewery Company in its possession no less than 90 tied houses, which are affected by this Bill?

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Long, Wilts, Devizes): I desire, in the first place, to thank the hon. Member for Sunderland for the very full and sufficient notice he was good enough to give me of his intention to bring forward this subject. I desire also to thank him for having given me this opportunity of making a short, and I hope a satisfactory, explanation to the House. I make no complaint of the fact that the hon. Gentleman did not carry away from the Committee that impression of my remarks which I intended to convey. I desire to apologise to the House for not expressing myself on that occasion so clearly and fully as I ought to have done. I hope the House will allow me to say in excuse for this omission on my part that I was completely taken aback at the moment. I had no notice that such a question was to be referred to, and was not in the House when the hon. Member for Cirencester made his speech. I did at the time feel somewhat acutely what appeared to be an imputation implying dishonourable motives in connection with my Parliamentary action. With reference to the question, Was I not one of the founders of the Bath Brewery Company? I am not quite sure what a "founder" is. I had no interest in this company until I was asked by local gentlemen personally known to me if I would accept that position in the company, and I said I would if all things were satisfactorily and properly conducted. Secondly, I believe my name does appear as one of the first shareholders. I should like to be allowed to add that my interest in this concern amounts to £1,000, and that I am chairman, and receive my fees as such. I believe the statement as to the tied houses to be correct. I feel I owe an explanation to the House as to why it was that when the question was raised I did not enter upon this point. The fact is, as I have already said, that I was somewhat taken aback, and, in the second place, my attention was directed solely to the point raised by the hon. Member. I admit that it ought not to have been so, but for the moment it did not occur to me that my position as the Chairman or a Director of the Company was a matter which I ought to have mentioned to the Committee. I did mention the fact that I was a shareholder. I should like to be allowed to add that after I sat down it occurred to me that I had not sufficiently taken the Committee into my confidence. I went into the Lobby and consulted one or two hon. Gentlemen as to whether I ought to add a further statement to what I had said. Hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House assured me that my statement was sufficiently complete, and, following their advice, I did not make any further statement. I hope the House will believe what I most sincerely assure them, that I had no intention whatever of concealing my connection with this Brewery Company or in any way minimising my position with regard to it. My desire was to state fully what my position was, and I very much regret I omitted to state I was Chairman of that Company. I thank the hon. Gentleman for giving me this opportunity of correcting what I said.

MR. STOREY: Perhaps the House will allow me to say I accept the statement made by the hon. Gentleman with willingness, fully believing that he acted from pure inadvertence. But, of course, in saying that, I still retain my own conviction that it is not desirable that this Bill should be pushed forward by the votes of Members interested in the trade.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): Is it intended to go on with the Local Taxation Bill on Monday, or will it be dropped?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I hope it will come on on Monday after the Motion I shall make at an early hour in the evening.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman take care that the Lord Advocate shall be in his place on Monday when the Bill comes on?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I regret the hon. Gentleman should have thought it necessary to ask that question. The House is well aware that the Lord Advocate is most constant in his attendance in the House, and most assiduous in the discharge of his public duties.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I desire to call attention to Mr. T. W. Russell's letter on the licensing question in Ireland, which appears in the *Times* of to-day, and to ask the Government when the Amendments extending the Licensing Clauses to Ireland will be laid on the Table?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the hon. and learned Gentleman's memory has somewhat failed him in this matter. In the course of the animated discussion which took place some time back on this question, I stated not once, but many times, that the Government would not be responsible for putting Amendments of the kind suggested on the Paper; but that if hon. Members put Amendments on the Paper the Government would consider them.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Drafting Amendments to a Bill is a work of almost inconceivable trouble. Are hon. Members to take all that trouble, and is the only return to be that the Government will consider them?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The labour of drafting Amendments may be considerable, but it seems to have been got over somewhat successfully in regard to this Bill. I prefer the Bill in its present shape, and do not think we should gain by introducing the innumerable questions which would be raised by the Amendments suggested. I think the whole thing should stand over until Local Government has been established in Ireland.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when that will be?

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): When will the Scotch Police Bill be introduced?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I hope the Scotch Superannuation Bill will be printed and circulated to-morrow.

ON-LICENCES.

Return ordered—

"Of (1) the number of On-Licences in each licensing district where the tenant and owner on the register are different persons; and (2) the number of persons in each district, and the names of such persons, who are on the register as owners of two, three, four, and any greater number of premises in respect of which On-Licences have been granted, with the number of such licences attached to each name."—(*Mr. Summers.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS III.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £37,586, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1891, for the Salaries of the Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners of the Metropolitan Police, and of the Receiver for the Metropolitan Police District, the Pay and Expenses of Officers of Metropolitan Police employed on special duties, and the Salaries and Expenses of the Inspectors of Constabulary."

(5.0.) SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I do not think that, during the 60 years which have elapsed since the Metropolitan Police Force was established, the House of Commons has ever come to the consideration of this Vote in circumstances more grave, and, I may say, more dangerous. Nobody can deny that the condition of things in reference to the Metropolitan Police at this moment is most profoundly unsatisfactory. We had occasion more than a year ago to discuss this matter, when, unfortunately, differences of opinion had arisen between the Secretary of State and the then Chief Commissioner of Police, Sir C. Warren, which led to Sir Charles Warren's retirement. The Home Secretary has now parted with a second Chief Commissioner of Police, Mr. Monro, and an open breach, which, in my opinion, is most mischievous and dangerous to the discipline of the Metropolitan Police, has taken place between the authorities at the Home Office and the authorities at Scotland Yard. This is not a matter to be considered in a Party spirit, or from a Party point of view. I think I have some claim to say that, because in the difficulties that arose between the Home Secretary and Sir C. Warren I did my best, not to support the Government or the right hon. Gentleman, but to support the authority of the office that he held. I am sorry to say that with precisely the same object and with every desire to support the Secretary of State, and the authority and dignity of his office, I have come to a totally different conclusion, and I also regret to have to state that what I have to say must be in entire condemnation of the course which the right hon. Gentleman has taken on this occasion. On the previous occasion—and I recall the fact with pleasure—I had the gratification of being thanked by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury for the course I then took. I do not know whether he will thank me now, but I intend now to act on precisely the same principle that I acted upon then. It is natural for anyone who has discharged the duties of the responsible office of Home Secretary to have a certain sympathy with those who hold that office, and to desire to maintain the authority and the traditions of that office; and certainly it always has been and always shall be my wish to do so. But I cannot help asking how the Secretary of State has acted in this matter. If I condemn the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman, it is because, in my opinion, he has strained the authority of his office and has lowered its credit by the course which he has pursued. The situation which arose a year and a half ago in connection with the case of Sir Charles Warren filled me with surprise as we had had no former experience of such a state of things existing between the Home Office and Scotland Yard. During the time of my predecessors in office, Sir R. Cross, Mr. Gathorne-Hardy, and Sir G. Grey, there was complete confidence between the two Departments, and there was a complete absence of conflict and of friction between the Secretary of State and those who, as his subordinates and his assistants, were at the head of the police; and therefore I view the new spectacle of conflict and friction between the Home Office and Scotland Yard with surprise and regret. For my own part, I had the advantage of acting at the Home Office with the most eminent public servants who were at the head of the Metropolitan Police. I have always borne testimony and I always shall bear it to the signal qualities which were possessed by Sir Edmund Henderson, whose judgment and good sense were beyond all praise, and I have always regarded what I may call the accidental misfortune which led to his retirement from his office as a grievous loss both to the public and to the police. I had also the advantage of acting with the late Colonel Pearson, whose death all who knew him will regret. I was also very sorry when the hon. and learned Member for Sheffield left the Police Force, not because of any difference which had arisen between himself and the Home Office, but because he was seeking another and a larger career. I am sure that the hon. and learned Member will bear testimony to the fact that in his days the relations between the Home Office and Scotland Yard were of the most friendly description. There was in those days no question as to the supremacy of the Secretary of State—he undoubtedly was supreme, and he must be supreme, because he is responsible to this House; and in the future, as in the past, the head of the police must be responsible to somebody, either to the Secretary of State or to the County Council. But in those days no question arose about the supreme authority of the Secretary of State. There was no occasion for it to arise; that authority was never questioned; it was never disputed; it was never, I hope, asserted offensively or tyrannically. The Secretary of State and the Chief Commissioner of Police were upon the footing with regard to each other of confidential colleagues, who were acting together in discharging a very responsible public duty. In my opinion, the first principle of good administration is that the chief of any Department should seek to acquire and to command the sympathies and the goodwill of the men with whom and through whom he has to work. In the present case what do we see? There is a constant conflict between the Secretary of State and the Chief Commissioner of Police, and certainly there are indications of a great deal more conflict than has actually come to our knowledge. There have been retirements of one Chief Commissioner of Police after another, and beyond that there is a discontented and dissatisfied Police Force as the result of the administration of the right hon. Gentleman at the Home Office during the past four years. In my opinion, it is impossible that such a state of things should be allowed to go on. The retirement of Sir Charles Warren, necessary as it was, was to my mind a great blow to the discipline of the Police Force. The spectacle of the Home Secretary divided from the Chief Commissioner of Police was one which the Police Force had never seen before, and it had a most injurious effect upon that force. But the resignation of Mr. Monro, and the circumstances by which it was accompanied, are of a much more serious nature, because it is no secret that at this moment the Police Force have rallied round the Chief Commissioner and against the Home Secretary. That is a very grave situation, and one of which we have had no previous experience. In my opinion, that is not a safe state of things for the Metropolis, and it is one which constitutes an extremely evil condition of things for the police. What has brought about this extraordinary and deplorable result? We do not know. We have had a statement from the Secretary of State. The right hon. Gentleman the other day read a letter from Mr. Monro, and made a statement with reference to it which Mr. Monro has declared to be an incomplete and *ex parte* statement. I have asked over and over again for further Papers on the subject, but they are not forthcoming. This is the statement of Mr. Monro in a letter of his which has been published—

> "My views as to police administration, unfortunately, differ in many important respects from those held by the Secretary of State, and I have received clear indications that the duties of the successor of Colonel Pearson are to be intrusted to a gentleman who, however estimable personally, has no police, military, or legal training."

We, therefore, know that the Secretary of State was at issue with the Chief Commissioner of Police in many important respects on matters of police administration. This is a very unfortunate state of things. The two particulars which have been given, in reference to which there has been a difference of opinion between the Home Secretary and the Chief Commissioner, are, first, the appointment of Colonel Pearson's successor; and, secondly, the question of police superannuation. In Mr. Ruggles-Brise, whose name has been imported into this discussion, I take a very strong personal interest. I had the pleasure, and I consider it an honour, to have introduced Mr. Ruggles-Brise into the Public Service. He was the son of a respected Member who formerly sat on the other side of the House, but that was a fact that I did not take into consideration when I appointed him, because I think that, in making appointments in the Public Service, we ought not to be influenced by political considerations. Mr. Ruggles-Brise entered the Public Service with the highest character to recommend him—he had distinguished himself at the University, and he more than fulfilled the expectations that had been formed with regard to him, and in a remarkably short space of time he reached a very distinguished position, and he has filled the office of private secretary, not only to myself, but to all my successors. Certainly there is no man more deserving of public preferment than Mr. Ruggles-Brise. But, in appointing a successor to Colonel Pearson, one of the first conditions was that the appointment should be made with the cordial co-operation and sympathy of the gentleman who was to be the chief and the colleague of the person appointed. I wish to illustrate my meaning by referring to the case of Mr. Monro. I also had the high honour of introducing Mr. Monro into the Police Force when the hon. and learned Member for Sheffield retired. Mr. Monro was recommended to me. I did not know him personally. I suggested his name to Sir Edmund Henderson; and I confess that Sir Edmund had at the time some doubts whether Mr. Monro's Indian experience was sufficient to render his appointment desirable. However, upon consideration, Colonel Henderson said, "If your judgment is so, I shall be delighted to receive Mr. Monro and to have experience of his services." A fortnight afterwards Colonel Henderson called upon me, and he said, "I have to come to thank you for having placed in Scotland Yard one of the best and ablest men we have ever had there." In my opinion, there ought to be between the Secretary of State and the Chief Commissioner that sort of good feeling which leads to cordial concurrence in the making of appointments of that description. What does Mr. Monro say? He says that the duties of the successor to Colonel Pearson are to be intrusted to a gentleman who, however estimable, he does not think fit for the place. The right hon. Gentleman left Mr. Monro to retire under the conviction that he was to have as a colleague a gentleman he objected to, and that the Secretary of State was refusing to appoint a gentleman who had his entire confidence, and who he thought ought to be appointed. While accepting the resignation of Mr. Monro, tendered under that belief, the right hon. Gentleman said that all the time he was intending to appoint the gentleman named by Mr. Monro. I call that bad administration. If Mr. Monro was a valuable public servant, why was he to be allowed to resign under a misapprehension of this character? What led Mr. Monro to believe that Mr. Ruggles-Brise was to be appointed and that Mr. Howard was not to be appointed? Why was Mr. Monro not told that Mr. Howard was to be appointed until after his own resignation had been accepted? With reference to this office, of course the Minister who is responsible must be the best judge of an appointment; but still it is a grave responsibility for a Secretary of State to refuse to listen to the advice of the Chief Commissioner when he recommends that an office shall be given, by way of promotion, to a gentleman who is already in the force. I do not say that the force have any right to claim promotion; I do not say that there is any limit upon the discretion or upon the responsibility of the Secretary of State; but when it is placed before him that it may lead to discontent in the force if promotion is not given to one already in the force, it is a heavy responsibility he incurs in refusing the advice of the Chief Commissioner, or leading him to believe it is refused. What do the police think—what can they think—when they find Mr. Monro resigning and see it stated that he has resigned because a promotion was not made from the force, and the next day they see that, under the stress of his resignation, the appointment he desired to make has been made? In these circumstances, what becomes of the authority of the Secretary of State? How can it be sustained and respected? In my opinion, the whole proceeding, so far as we are permitted to know anything about it, was a most injudicious proceeding. The popular impression is that the Home Secretary did not intend to appoint Mr. Howard, or he did not let Mr. Monro know he intended to appoint him until he had allowed Mr. Monro to resign under the belief that Mr. Howard was not to be appointed. If that is not so, no doubt the facts as we know them will be altered by the right hon. Gentleman's statement. If he did not agree to the appointment of Mr. Howard before the resignation of Mr. Monro, and if he agreed to the appointment after the resignation, I say that is bad administration; and I cannot conceive that anything could be more injurious to the discipline of the police, seeing that the right hon. Gentleman is made by Act of Parliament the highest authority over the police. So much for the personal matter with reference to the appointment of a successor to Colonel Pearson. I now come to the greater matter of superannuation; and here, again, we do not know all that has happened with reference to the Superannuation Bill. We have the statement that the Chief Commissioner had come to arm's-length with the Secretary of State on the subject of superannuation; and a more unfortunate condition of things, with reference to administration, it is impossible to conceive. The other day the First Lord of the Treasury said that the Superannuation Bill of the Government was founded upon the lines of those Bills which were introduced by myself and my right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton, as well as by a Gentleman whose absence from this House we all regret; I mean Mr. Hibbert. We introduced those Bills with the friendly concurrence and support of the Chief Commissioner of Police; the provisions of those Bills were received with contentment and satisfaction by the Police Force, and the terms and conditions were fair and reasonable at that time; but whether you can have those terms again I greatly doubt. The mis-management and misconduct of the right hon. Gentleman, in my opinion, have made it very difficult, if not impossible, to recur to those terms. What has he done? He has allowed the Chief Commissioner of Police to resign upon a Superannuation Bill, and to gather the Police Force around him as their champion. Here is the Secretary of State at issue with the man who, up to five minutes ago, has been acting as Chief Commissioner of Police, and at issue upon this very question. That is the position into which the administration of the right hon. Gentleman has brought us. That being so, if you cannot now settle the matter upon the terms of former Superannuation Bills, the consequence must be that the ratepayers will have to pay a heavy price for your mis-management. Whatever rule you are going to apply to the Metropolitan Police you must apply to the police all over the country; they demand, and they have a right to demand, that they shall be dealt with on the same terms. Therefore, if you are obliged to alter those terms, you will have to alter your unfortunate Local Taxation Bill, because you will have to deal with the question of superannuation upon a different footing. What, then, is the situation in which we are placed? When the Metropolitan Police was instituted it was placed under the immediate authority of the Secretary of State. What authority has the Secretary of State had over the London Police during the last fortnight? Absolutely none. It has not been to him they have looked as the head of it; it has not been to him they have looked for instructions; they have looked to a different quarter. The position of the Metropolis is different from that of all other Municipalities. In all other Municipalities the police is under the control of a popular body, which has behind it the force of the public opinion of the community it represents. For reasons which were thought good at the time, and which I myself have thought good since, a different rule has been established in the Metropolis, and the police are put under the Executive Government and under the authority of the Secretary of State. He does not carry with him that authority which belongs to the Watch Committee of a Town Council. His authority must depend entirely upon the exercise of judgment and discretion. When that authority is subverted, what is your position? You have nothing to replace it. In the Metropolis you have something like a Prætorian guard, subject to no Local Authority, electing its own Emperor, and doing what it pleases. That is a situation which our Constitution does not recognise. You must choose between two things—you must either have ministerial responsibility to this House, or you must have a Municipality having authority over its own police. I am bound to say, holding the opinions I have held and being aware of the risks which might befal the popular administration of the police in the Metropolis, I think the evils existing at this moment in the Police Force in relation to the Secretary of State are greater than any risk which could arise under municipal control. In my opinion, the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman has inflicted a fatal and incurable blow upon the authority of the Secretary of State over the Metropolitan Police. I doubt whether it is possible to retrieve the position after what has gone on in London, with the police despising the Secretary of State, and holding meetings under the auspices of the Chief Commissioner, and with the Secretary of State and the Chief Commissioner at arm's length. If the Secretary of State could not agree with Mr. Monro, why was not his successor appointed at once, so that the Secretary of State might have had the co-operation of a Chief Commissioner with whom he was in accord, and the authority of his office might have been maintained? I can only conjecture it took some time to find anybody with courage to assume the office under the circumstances. I do not blame Mr. Monro; I do not blame the police; I blame the Secretary of State for a condition of things absolutely inconsistent with the discipline of the force. Just consider what was happening the other day. We begin with the Chief Inspectors and Superintendents holding meetings to discuss and condemn the legislative policy of the Secretary of State.

Is that a thing which, in the midst of a population of 5,000,000, can be permitted? Let me give a parallel. Suppose that under the auspices of the Commander-in-Chief the Army at Aldershot were collected to discuss the Estimates and to condemn the conduct of the Secretary of State for War. That is just parallel to what has been happening in London during the last fortnight, and the Secretary of State sits down calmly under it. One of two things ought to have happened. Either Mr. Monro was wrong, and should have been removed from authority by the Secretary of State, or, as I am much inclined to think, Mr. Monro was in the right, and the Secretary of State should have removed himself. To go on in this state of things is to exhibit to the police an example of indiscipline, between the Chief Commissioner and his chief, which is certain to demoralise and have a most injurious effect upon the police. What authority can the Secretary of State be expected to exercise? The whole Force have no regard for him at all, but look to the Chief Commissioner as the man to settle their grievances, to direct their policy, and positively to appoint the Assistant Commissioner. That is the position they have taken up. They took up that position in reference to the appointment of Mr. Howard, and, to their view, the Secretary of State has succumbed. They have taken up that position in reference to pay and pensions, and what will be the issue of that it would be a bold man who would predict. That is the position into which the Metropolitan Police have been brought by the administration of the right hon. Gentleman. As to the successor of Mr. Monro, paragraphs have appeared in the papers saying that Mr. Monro is to return. I never believed in that report, much as I should desire it to be true. How could Mr. Monro return —excellent Chief Commissioner as he is? Why, Sir, if he had come back, he must have come back as the master of the Secretary of State. Why has the Secretary of State put himself in a position in which so valuable an officer cannot return? I have known Mr. Monro, and I am sure there could not be the smallest difficulty in two persons of whom he was one coming to such an understanding as should exist between such officials. Mr. Monro cannot return. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman: Have the Government considered what may be the consequences of Mr. Monro's not returning? Have they considered the position in which Mr. Monro stands at this moment in reference to the Metropolitan Police? I do not want to aggravate the difficulty of the position, but, in my opinion, it is so grave that I cannot pass over it. I will say nothing with reference to the distinguished gentleman who has accepted the position of Chief Commissioner of Police. I know how difficult such a position must be for anyone coming fresh to it with things in their present condition. But, with reference to Mr. Monro, I think that one of the great merits and advantages of his position was that he was a civilian. I do not lay that down as an absolute rule. I have known distinguished men in the control of the Police Force who were military men; but depend upon it, in the control of a Police Force, let it be a large force or a small one, the only chance of success for a military man is to divest himself of the military spirit as Sir E. Henderson so admirably did. If you attempt to introduce a military administration it will be a great disaster. I hope the distinguished officer who has been newly appointed will enter upon the position with a sense of that fact. I should not be doing my duty if I did not express my opinion that the introduction of a military spirit into the discipline of the Metropolitan Police is one of the worst things that can happen to that force, or to the population committed to their charge. I have said that I regard the existing system as only a temporary system. I have arrived with regret at the conclusion that what has happened during the last four years has so shaken and undermined the authority of the Secretary of State that it will be impossible permanently to retain the authority over the police in the present hands. I believe the record of the right hon. Gentleman's administration will be that it has put an end to the present system. We have to think of the present and the immediate future. No change in the existing system can now be made, but it is impossible that in the present hands the system can go on. I do not believe that the right hon. Gentleman, in the present state of the feeling of the police—in presence of the fact that he has caused and maintained the resignation of Mr. Monro—can with advantage restore the police to that condition of discipline which is absolutely essential to the well-being of the Metropolis; and, therefore, in speaking of the right hon. Gentleman's position, and the course which he has taken, I regard in him the great obstacle to the restoration of a sound and proper feeling on the part of the police of London. I regret to have to make this statement, but nobody can doubt that the position of the police is getting worse from day to day. Yesterday it was a question of the Superintendents and their *ultimatum*; to-day, I see by the newspapers, it is a question of the Force itself, who desire to go further, and in a different direction to the *ultimatum* of the Superintendents. What is the situation of the Police Force on the dismissal of the justly-popular Chief Commissioner? They are, and have been, gathering under the auspices of that Chief Commissioner to remonstrate with, and to discuss and practically to destroy the authority of, the Secretary of State. That is a condition not creditable, not safe, and absolutely un-Constitutional. This is a state of things which ought not to be allowed to continue. It is a state of things which has never existed before, and I think the Government will make a great mistake if they do not recognise the fact that the police must be dealt with in a different manner and in different hands.

*(5.40.) THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I have, of course, no complaint to make, Sir, of the attack made by the right hon. Gentleman as far as it applies to me personally. But I should have been better pleased if he had based that attack upon a statement of facts somewhat more definite, in order that I could more readily grapple with it. The right hon. Gentleman has made me personally responsible for everything that has happened untowardly, and very much to my regret, for some weeks past; and he has done it without making that statement of fact which would justify him in bringing such charges, against even a political opponent, in a matter which, as the right hon. Gentleman himself justly observed, is not a Party matter. Most assuredly I cannot take to myself the blame of the slightest difference with Mr. Monro which is due to my own conduct. I have had, and have now, every feeling of sympathy for Mr. Monro. I selected him to be Chief Commissioner, knowing him to be a fit and able man for the post, and in many particulars he has discharged the duties of the office highly to my satisfaction. I deny in the most absolute way that there has been any personal difference between Mr. Monro and myself as to the discharge of his duties, which has led to his resignation. Nobody more regretted or was more surprised at that resignation than I was. The right hon. Gentleman has inquired into the causes of that resignation, and there, I think, he was not quite fair, because he put in the front rank the question about the appointment of an Assistant Commissioner. I say again—and I have good reason for the statement—that that question had nothing to do with Mr. Monro's resignation. If Mr. Ruggles-Brise had been appointed, Mr. Monro would not have thought it necessary to resign, and I have stated to the House, as I also stated to Mr. Monro, that I would not have accepted that as the ground of his *ultimatum*. As I said when the resignation was tendered to me, I had formed no decision on the question of whom I should appoint, and I had expressed no decision to Mr. Monro. I did in this matter what the right hon. Gentleman said every Secretary of State ought to do in distributing patronage in the police. The appointment, of course, is mine, and I am responsible for it; but I desired, above all things, to make no appointment against the opinion and feeling of the Chief Commissioner, and accordingly I took the opportunity, Mr. Monro having submitted to me a recommendation, of opening the subject. I need have no delicacy in mentioning names now, as they have already been made so public. Mr. Monro recommended Mr. Howard. I had, of course, numerous other applicants for the post, and, among others, was Mr. Ruggles-Brise. I am happy to join most emphatically in the praise which the right hon. Gentleman has awarded to Mr. Ruggles-Brise, but the right hon. Gentleman was incorrect in one particular. It was not due to the right hon. Gentleman that Mr. Ruggles-Brise entered the Public Service. He

obtained a distinguished place in it by competitive examination, and he came with a first-class from Oxford.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I appointed him to the Home Office.

*MR. MATTHEWS: No; he came in by competitive examination. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that I am right. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman appointed him as his private secretary, but he entered the Civil Service by competitive examination, having shown his ability by taking a first-class at Oxford. In my experience of him—now lasting four years — I found that his ability, character, and capacity for business were such that I considered him a perfectly fit candidate for the position of Assistant Commissioner. He has served not only as private secretary to myself, but also to the right hon Gentleman (Sir W. Harcourt), the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Childers), and Viscount Cross when he was at the Home Office. He has, therefore, for five years had—it is true, not an experience of the actual administration of the Police Force—but has had knowledge of all the principles of policy which have guided successive Secretaries of State in dealing with the Police Force; and that, in my judgment, eminently fitted him for the office of Assistant Commissioner. I discussed the merits of the candidates frankly and confidentially with Mr. Monro. I desired to hold that kind of confidential communication which I agree with the right hon. Gentleman ought to take place between the Minister in whom the patronage is vested and the chief of the Department in which that patronage is to take place. It was in order to ascertain the feelings of Mr. Monro on the subject that I had this conversation with him. This conversation took place on June 9, and the interview closed without my having formed or expressed any determination as to the person whom I should appoint as Assistant Commissioner. The right hon. Gentleman has found fault with me for appointing Mr. Howard. My reasons are these, and I will be perfectly frank with the House: I felt the moment Mr. Monro's resignation was in my hands on June 10 that the want of experience in Mr. Ruggles-Brise, which, under Mr. Monro's own guidance, would have been of comparatively small importance, now assumed, on the contrary, the gravest importance. While the scale might have been very evenly balanced between the two candidates up to that time, yet, after Mr. Monro's resignation, the claims of the candidate who had had daily experience of the police decidedly preponderated. That is the whole story of this matter of patronage. I regret that it was ever introduced at all to public notice. It must be disagreeable to both the gentlemen whose names have been mentioned. I think I am entitled to say, from communication I have had with him, that it was not, and could not have been, the cause of the resignation of Mr. Monro even if Mr. Ruggles-Brise had been appointed, and it certainly ought not to be suggested as the cause of my appointing Mr. Howard that Mr. Monro resigned because I at first proposed to appoint Mr. Ruggles-Brise. Now, I cannot disguise from the House the fact that this question of police superannuation is one of extraordinary gravity. The right hon. Gentleman has charitably said that the ratepayers will have to thank me for increased burdens. I can only say that for more than 12 months my best attention and endeavours have been given to devising some means of diminishing the burden, already too heavy, which weighs on the Metropolitan ratepayers in that respect. The rapid growth of the deficiency in the superannuation income has been the cause of grave anxiety to me for nearly two years. In 1870 this deficiency was £63,000, whereas in 1889-90 it was close upon £150,000. So heavily did the subject weigh upon my mind that, in the Autumn of 1889, I appointed a Departmental Committee for the purpose of considering the whole question of the superannuation of the Metropolitan Police and what changes in the system could best be effected so as to diminish the burden upon the ratepayers. That Committee was constituted in a way which must command the confidence of the House. The Commissioner and Receiver of the Metropolitan Police were upon it, as were also the Under Secretary for the Home Department, Sir Arthur Haliburton, Assistant Under Secretary at the War Office, and Mr. Mowatt of the Treasury. What I had in my own mind was to bring about, as far as possible, a reduction of the charge of superannuation. Before that Committee there was disclosed a fact unknown before, namely, that in the Metropolitan Police Force itself, which had always been considered to be favoured beyond every other force in the country with regard to superannuation, there was discontent—I will not put it higher than that—with the terms of superannuation allowed. When the Committee began to deliberate on the details of the superannuation scheme generally the attitude of the Commissioner was this: He alleged that a promise had been made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir W. Harcourt) that the pensions of the Metropolitan Police should be improved, and that a similar promise was to be gathered from Bills presented to the House by successive Liberal Governments. Accordingly, he stated to his fellow-Committeemen that he regarded it as a vital principle underlying the whole matter, that a promise had been made to improve the pensions, and he declined even to discuss any detail in connection with the system that was inconsistent with that promise. The alleged promise of the right hon. Gentleman was contained in a speech delivered at a dinner or a luncheon or some festive occasion in favour of the Police Orphanage. I must say I do not gather from that language any promise, nor do I think that any promise can be fairly inferred from the Bills, but Mr. Monro held a different opinion, and this shows that the idea of his resignation was not hastily adopted. When the Commissioner expressed these views I suspended the deliberations of the Departmental Committee, for obviously a Report without the concurrence of the Commissioner would have been satisfactory neither to me nor to any one else. I then turned my mind to the framing of a Bill upon just principles which might meet the exigencies of the case, and I took for my guide the Bill which the two right hon. Gentlemen opposite introduced, but failed to carry. My desire in framing the Bill was most certainly to act as liberally to the police as my financial conscience would allow me. I had not the slightest intention or desire not to treat the police in the future, as I believe they have been treated in the past, with the utmost consideration and fairness, and although I could not share the view enunciated by the Commissioner that any promise had been made to the police by the right hon. Gentleman, or by anybody in this House, yet I could not shut my eyes to the fact that the introduction of Bills by successive Governments was a fact upon which just expectations might be founded. It went no further than that. I took these Bills as the basis of the scheme I have endeavoured to frame, and I feel sure that in my drafts I have not given less than was given in them. Indeed, I rather think that, on the whole, the terms I have given are somewhat more advantageous than those of the previous Bills. It was in the discussion of my draft that a cloud arose in a summer sky. I sent the Bill to the Commissioner for his perusal and opinion—a course which I do not think derogatory to the dignity of the Secretary of State, or more than was due to the Commissioner himself. Well, the Commissioner commented with considerable severity on that draft. I spent several hours with him in discussing the question, and I made alterations to meet certain of his views. Many of the points he raised were sound, and I adopted a vast majority of his suggestions. But the point upon which the Commissioner insisted, and without which he stated that, in his view, no Bill would be acceptable to, or would be accepted by, the police, was a pension of not less than two-thirds of the pay for 25 years' service, without condition either of age or medical certificate, and without liability to deduction in the event of service in another police force or in employment of the State. That the Commissioner considered a *sine quâ non*. Now, I believe, and I shall be prepared to argue it when the proper time comes, that with regard to the amount insisted upon by the Commissioner for ultimate pension the demand was not what fairness or even liberality required. I informed the Commissioner that the amounts and the details of the scheme in my draft must be regarded as provisional; that I had not had an opportunity of submitting the draft to my colleagues, and that I should have to get their approval and assent before the Bill was presented to the House, and before the scheme could be regarded as final. I had a difficulty in understanding that the head of the Police Force should, in the circumstances, treat the Bill, though in some points it might not have been in accordance with his views, as a ground of resignation. But on June 10, the day after we had discussed the Bill for hours, I received the resignation of the Commissioner, in the terms which have been published. The Commissioner said—

> "The views which I entertain as to the justice and reasonableness of the claims of the Metropolitan Police, in connection with superannuation, being unfortunately on vital points diametrically opposed to those of the Secretary of State, I cannot, for reasons given in my Memorandum of the 5th inst., accept the Bill as adequately meeting such just and reasonable claims."

In many respects I agree with what fell from the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir W. Harcourt) as to the relations that should exist between the Secretary of State and the Commissioner of Police. I agree that the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of State alone, must be responsible for the policy of the police. [Mr. GRAHAM: The London County Council.] I think that when there is a large force of policemen in the heart of this Metropolis it is not a matter for the County Council. I say that the police must be governed in the last resort by the Secretary of State, who is amenable and responsible to Parliament. Of course, I admit that executive details and the discipline of the Force should rest almost entirely with the Commissioner, and I should certainly abstain from interfering in matters of that kind; but on all questions of policy, involving the finance of the Force, the general rules of the Force, or the relation of the Force to the public—on all questions of this kind—the decision of the Secretary of State must be final. I quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman that the Commissioner should be consulted, and that every attention should be paid to his opinions, and I readily admit the high capability of Mr. Monro to consult with and advise the Secretary of State. But I also think that on questions of policy it is expedient that the Commissioner of Police should be ready to accept the decisions of the Government, through the Secretary of State, and to cordially carry them out. After giving the most careful consideration I could to this letter of resignation, coming as it did, not merely as an act of hasty feeling, such as may occur to the best of men under given circumstancos, but as the result of an attitude that had been persistently maintained for months, I came to the conclusion that it was my duty to accept the resignation. In view of the attitude of the Commissioner in assuming to treat, as if he were an independent power, as to the terms of superannuation of his Force, as to demanding from the Government greater pecuniary advantages for the men, and as to tendering his resignation upon the terms of a Bill which had not been placed before the House, and which no one could settle but the House, and that being not a momentary or hasty act, but the outcome and result of a continued line of action, and a continued expression of opinion, I came to the conclusion it was my duty to accept the resignation. The right hon. Gentleman says that is all my fault. He has not condescended to explain how or why. I can only say I exhausted my ingenuity in trying to frame the terms of the Superannuation Bill in such a way that they might meet with the assent of the Commissioner of Police. I desired, and I shall desire, to have the concurrence of that officer in the proposals which we feel it our duty to submit to Parliament on this subject. I am sure the Commissioner himself will say I was never wanting in consideration or in courtesy to him. Although in what may be compared to a Committee discussion which we held, we both expressed our views decidedly and positively, there was not the least heat, temper, or ill-will displayed. I have said I was surprised at the resignation of Mr. Monro. I have said I accepted it, not on the miserable ground of patronage, which never ought to have been introduced, but on the greater point. I felt I had no alternative but to accept the resignation. I accepted it with very great regret. I take leave to say Mr. Monro has displayed many admirable qualities. He rendered great service to the State as Assistant Commissioner. His organisation of the Department was efficient and successful, and his undertaking the management of the Police Force at the moment of the unfortunate resignation of Sir Charles Warren, to which I do not think it is necessary to refer further, was of itself a service to the public and the Government. In many respects his administration of the police has been extremely efficient and able. No one regrets more than myself the attitude Mr. Monro thought it necessary to adopt upon this question of legislation—an attitude which seemed to me totally inconsistent with the relative position of the Secretary of State and the Government, and of this House, and of Parliament, and the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman says it is all my fault. I listened with some interest and curiosity to know why. He did not enlighten me. I know not how or in what way I could have done more to studiously avoid anything which might lead to friction. The right hon. Gentleman went on to charge upon me, in language certainly of extraordinary vehemence, the state of things that has arisen since the resignation of Mr. Monro. There, again, I regret that the right hon. Gentleman has not taken more pains to ascertain the facts. I have most carefully watched, and most accurately ascertained what has been happening from day to day, and here I must defend Mr. Monro against the accusation that was rather suggested than definitely made by the right hon. Gentleman, namely, that he had, in some sense, encouraged or promoted something very much resembling disaffection in the Force.

SIR W. HARCOURT: What I did say was that, under the authority of the Commissioner of Police, meetings have been constantly taking place of various members of the Police Force to discuss the measures of the Secretary of State. That I gather from the newspapers. Of course, I assume the meetings were under the authority and permission of the Commissioner of Police, or they could not have taken place.

*MR. MATTHEWS: I repeat it is difficult to grapple with allegations that ended in nothing. The right hon. Gentleman must mean, I suppose, that in consequence of what has happened between the 11th of June and the present day, I ought to have dismissed Mr. Monro from Scotland yard. He is mistaken in his facts. He has accepted statements put forward by interested persons, without any warrant or authority. These alleged meetings, as reported in the Press, have not taken place; they are the inventions of certain persons—[Sir W. HARCOURT: The newspapers]—not only the newspapers—who have been attempting to get up an agitation. I have seen letters, and indeed, speeches, by members of what is called the Social Democratic Federation, in which they encourage the police to insubordination.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I was speaking of meetings of Superintendents; and I have seen documents signed by these Superintendents, and there have been sent to me documents purporting to be conclusions and the representations made by these Superintendents.

*MR. MATTHEWS: What actually occurred was this. Mr. Monro called before him the Superintendents, the Assistant Commissioners, and the Chief Constables, and informed them and directed them to inform the Force, that no meeting of the Force, no irregular agitation, and no combined action would be allowed, and I must, of course, strenuously defend Mr. Monro from the suggestion that, even at the period the right hon. Gentleman has alluded to, he did anything so disloyal, and so contrary to his duty, as to encourage, or foment, or allow anything resembling agitation. The only meeting which took place was a meeting of the chief officers of the police, summoned by the Commissioner himself, and summoned for the purpose of warning them that nothing of the kind now suggested by the right hon. Gentleman must take place. It was quite true, Mr. Monro went on to say, that the Superintendents, each of them in their own divisions, were at liberty to ascertain the best way they could, by private conference and otherwise, the feelings and opinions of the men stationed under them, and that they might then report to him. This I say, on the best authority, is what occurred. I was, of course, anxious to terminate the existing state of things at Scotland Yard, as rapidly as I could, but the right hon. Gentleman himself must know that the filling of such an office as that of Chief Commissioner of Police is a matter which requires grave consideration. He must also know that various steps are often necessary. I had, above all, to consider, which I did consider, the question of order in the Force, and I conceived that order in the Force would be in greater peril if I left it without a head, and, above all, if I withdrew, in any way resembling discredit, a chief to whom they were attached. Therefore, although I might not absolutely approve of everything that has taken place at Whitehall Place, since the 11th of June——

*MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: (Lanark, N.W.): I rise to a point of order. I wish to know whether the right hon. Gentleman is in order in imputing dereliction of duty to Mr. Monro?

*MR. MATTHEWS: I was imputing no dereliction of duty to Mr. Monro. Mr. Monro being at Whitehall Place was a security for the order and peace in the Metropolis, and a security for the good conduct and subordination of the Police Force, and, therefore, I do not admit I am open to the reproaches of the right hon. Gentleman for having allowed that state of things. I should have been glad if I could have terminated it earlier, but various matters had to be considered. Now, Sir, I am not aware that it would be seemly or right that I should discuss the personal qualities of the gentleman whom I have chosen to succeed Mr. Monro. His career speaks for him. So far as I have been able to judge that career has been distinguished and remarkable for every quality of ability and character. I share the feeling of the right hon. Gentleman that the military spirit is one to be deprecated. I do not agree with Mr. Monro when in his letter of resignation he treats police, military, and legal training upon an almost equal footing. I think the military training is of subordinate use, although I cannot deny that it is some use. Legal training I consider to be positively mischievous. I take the liberty to say that Sir E. Bradford will not bring the military spirit to the command of the police. He is a man whose civil services and whose civilian achievements far and away exceed and outweigh the military portion of his career. He did in India wield, control, and manage the whole civil as well as military administration of the State entrusted to him, and as Political Secretary at the Indian Office for some years he has acquired a more thorough and complete knowledge of civilian matters and pursuits than he even had before. I am quite sure he will not bring to the administration of the police any of those features the right hon. Gentleman and others desire to see absent. I think I have now travelled over the ground covered by the right hon. Gentleman. I cannot, of course, expect to have his approval. I should be glad if he had given me something more tangible to meet. It is a convenient course to say that everything has gone wrong since I was at the Home Office—to attribute it all to my misconduct.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman forgets that I defended him on the resignation of Sir Charles Warren.

*MR. MATTHEWS: I have by no means forgotten his speech on that occasion. I think it worthy of him and of his best days; but the right hon. Gentleman will pardon me for reminding him that he has imputed to me the blame for the resignation of Sir Charles Warren as a sort of makeweight, or as though the second resignation coming on the top of that was only a proof of how much I was to blame. I have laid the reasons for the resignation before the Committee. I believe I have stated them fully, but I am quite ready to answer any question any hon. Member may put to me on the subject. I am unable to take to myself, or to impute to Mr. Monro, anything resembling blame. Mr Monro is a man of strong will and energetic judgment, and men of that calibre and temper do find it difficult to recognise the Parliamentary exigencies of such a situation as this, and the way in which both they and the Secretary of State must obey the behests and the will of Parliament. Mr. Monro is a man whose opinions and convictions are so strong that he cannot reconcile himself to see anything but the adoption of those opinions. One must take these strong and adamantine characters as they are. Therefore, I beg to exonerate Mr. Monro from blame and censure, beyond that which is a necessary consequence of what I have said. Just as emphatically do I beg to repudiate the charges which in his extremely energetic way the right hon. Gentleman has sought to make against me.

(6.30.) MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): Whatever view may be taken of the action of the Home Secretary, we must all regret a state of things which has given rise to grave apprehension. Up to this evening, it was possible to hope that the Chief Commissionership would have been resumed by Mr. Monro, a gentleman who, whatever may be said for and against him, is certainly regarded as the advocate of the just and legitimate claims of the men, and as having, at all events, this one essential qualification for such an office as this in question, that beyond all doubt and controversy, although he was a strict and rigid disciplinarian, he enjoyed to the fullest extent the confidence of all ranks in the Metropolitan Force. Now, the Home Secretary has laid down a general principle which, in his judgment, should govern the relations between the Home Secretary and the Chief Commissioner; and, if I may venture to say so, I think he has laid down a sound doctrine. If I understand him correctly, that doctrine is that, so far as policy is concerned, the Home Secretary is and must be supreme; but, so far as administration is concerned, as contra-distinguished from policy, the Chief Commissioner should have, not perhaps an absolutely free hand, but, at all events, that he should have considerable latitude. I regard that as a very sound doctrine, but the mischief of the case is, that there is very little correspondence, so far as the case has been disclosed to us, between the principles and the practice of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman has referred at length to the question of superannuation; but as we shall have another opportunity of dealing with that I had better pass it by for the present. But I am very much surprised that the right hon. Gentleman did not refer to another point of difference mentioned by Mr. Monro in his letter, which was read to us a few nights ago. The passage I have particularly in view, and which the Home Secretary seems to have entirely ignored, is as follows:—

> "For many months I have found myself surrounded with difficulties in attempting to procure recognition of what seemed to me to be the very urgent demands of the Police Service in connection with other important matters."

that is to say, matters apart from the question of superannuation. On this aspect of the case the right hon. Gentleman has said positively nothing, although it seems to me we cannot really appreciate the merits of the quarrel, if quarrel it may fairly be called, between the right hon. Gentleman and the Chief Commissioner until we know what the points are to which reference is made in the passage I have quoted. If I am correctly informed, one of the demands Mr. Monro has been pressing on the attention of the Home Secretary is an improvement in the pay of the Metropolitan Police. For my own part, having devoted some attention to the subject, I think that the question of pay is more important to the rank and file of the Force than the question of superannuation. I find that in the Metropolitan Force, as compared with other Forces, there are very few men over 50, and also very few men who have served over 25 years. Out of a Force consisting of over 14,000 men, only 300 odd have completed 25 years' service. I find also that existing pensioners are comparatively young, the average age being only 45, the average of service having been 21 years. In these circumstances, I think it will be obvious that the question of Superannuation, however important, must be considered also in reference to the question of pay. No doubt, so far as Superintendents and other officers in responsible positions are concerned, the question of superannuation is important, because it takes many years to become Superintendent, and the period when they can claim these pensions must be rapidly approaching. But among the rank and file, pay is even more important than pensions, and, unless I am misinformed, the men consider it so themselves. Now, a word or two on this question of pay, because I think the present scale of pay for constables in the Metropolitan Police is not adequate—first of all, it is not reasonably adequate for the class of men you desire to introduce into the Force, and, I may add, keep there; secondly, it is inadequate, having regard to the duty they have to perform. The peculiar circumstances of London enable us to make a comparison which certainly ought to have great weight; I mean a comparison between the Metropolitan Force and the Police Force of the City of London. An hon. Member the other day asked what was the rate of pay of the City Police, and the right hon. Gentleman, not unnaturally, was unable at the moment to give the information. Now, I propose to place side by side the wages of three classes of constables in the Metropolitan and City Forces. In the lowest class the pay in the Metropolitan Force is 24s. a week, in the City 25s. In the second class 27s. in the Metropolitan Force, and 28s. 8d. in the City Force. And in the first class, which, I understand, can be attained after eight years' service, 30s. and 32s. 3d. respectively. The Committee will see that the rate of pay in the City contrasts very favourably in the interests of the men with the rate in the Metropolitan Force, and I certainly think no reason whatever can be alleged why the Metropolis generally should pay its police at a lower rate than is paid by the London Corporation. We have to consider this question of wages in regard to all classes of public servants, with reference to recent events, which in many cases have raised the rates of wages in trades and occupations outside the Public Service. Take the case of the docker, with 6d. an hour; he works the same number of hours as the police ordinarily do—and I emphasise the word ordinarily, because there is an enormous amount of overtime. The ordinary docker making the ordinary number of hours of police duty receives 26s. a week, or 2s. a week more than the lowest rate of Metropolitan policeman. And I remember after the gas stokers strike seeing an advertisement announcing that, in consequence of the hours of labour in that occupation, stokers were required at 8s. a day. I mention this case particularly; it is not an occupation that requires any training or skill, but simply physical endurance, in this instance no doubt to a considerable degree. But then in the Metropolitan police physical strength is quite as much required as in the work of gas stokers. Now, workmen have recently, by means of combination, and I may say agitation, been able to raise their rate of wages. I am quite aware that combination and agitation are inconvenient, and particularly so in the Public Service, but if you dislike combination and agitation among public servants, surely the best and most reasonable mode of proceeding is to remove the ground and reason for such by a timely concession of the reasonable demands which policemen or postmen or any body of persons might, by means of combination, be able to enforce. There is another matter not immediately concerned with this discussion so far as it has proceeded, upon which I hope we may have some information which has not yet been provided. I refer to the increase of the Metropolitan Police Force by 1,000 men. It is certainly a matter of soreness, a legitimate grievance, as I think, to the ratepayers of London that the Force is to be increased by 1,000 men, and they are, of course, to provide the necessary cost, without being in any way consulted in the matter. I do think that, having regard to the exceptional circumstances of the Metropolitan Police, before such an important addition as this was made there ought to have been an inquiry—not a Departmental inquiry, though I do not understand there was even that—but I think there ought to have been an inquiry something in the nature of an inquiry by Select Committee before so important a step, necessitating so considerable an increase on the burdens of the Metropolis, was taken. I want the right hon. Gentleman to-night to give us a direct answer how the cost of these additional 1,000 men is to be provided. We are somewhat at a loss to know from what source it is to be taken. It has been suggested—I do not know whether the suggestion is well founded or not—that the £150,000 which this House, under the Local Taxation Bill, will pay over to the Receiver of Metropolitan Police, or a considerable part of that money, is to be applied to the pay and cost of these 1,000 additional men. If that is so, I do think a course has been taken which, I am afraid, I must call a rather surreptitious course. It ought to have been brought before the attention of the Committee in a more direct manner before being sanctioned. Is this increase really necessary? During the last year or two, I have noticed that members of the Force are being used in a way to which I have not been before accustomed; what I must call a political use is being made of these men. Sometimes, when attending meetings—very small meetings sometimes—I have seen from two to six constables waiting at the door or patrolling near. I have no complaint to make of the conduct of the men; they have always conducted themselves in a proper and civil manner; but in the interest of the ratepayers, in the interest of persons whose property has to be protected, I do complain of the presence of these men on such occasions, the waste of the Force, and I think they would be very much better and more usefully employed on their ordinary beats, or their ordinary proper duty of preventing and detecting crime. Upon the question whether or not the increase is necessary, let me compare the position of the London Police and the position of the police in other large towns. In London I find the proportion of police to inhabitants is one to 435. Manchester is the only town that comes near this high proportion; the proportion in provincial towns, and in the largest of them, is generally little over half that of London. Then, again, when I take the test of the number of inhabited houses, I find that in London there are 16 policemen to every 1,000 inhabited houses. No town in the country comes near this proportion, Manchester again coming next with 12 men to every 1,000 inhabited houses. Now, only having regard to this comparison, should it be necessary to increase the number of Metropolitan Police? I hope we shall have some definite and distinct reply from the right hon. Gentleman, and I press this question upon him for this reason: that I find the relation of the population to the criminal classes in London according to Police Returns is as 2,000 to one. In what the public call "pleasure" towns, such as Bath, Brighton, Scarborough, and so on, the estimate is 1,500 to one, and in large centres of industry, such as Birmingham, Sheffield, and Wolverhampton, the criminal class is estimated as one to every 500 of population. Having regard to this ratio, again, I ask why is a still further increase of the Police Force necessary? It is true that last year there was an increase of crime in London of nearly 10 per cent., but I suggest whether the reason of such increase was not that under the *régime* of the right hon. Gentleman the police were being withdrawn from their legitimate duties for purposes which partake more or less of a political complexion? The moral to be drawn from the whole of the unfortunate controversies between the Secretary of State and successive Chief Commissioners is very plain: it is that the control of the Metropolitan Police should be transferred to the London County Council. It is obvious that mischief results from what I may call this dual control, for it appears to me to be almost a dual control, of the Home Office and Scotland Yard. On the other hand, nothing but good can result from the transfer. Whatever Government may be in power will be relieved from the obstruction to business which Parliamentary discussion of Metropolitan Police matter brings about; but over and above that, I put it mainly on the right of the ratepayers of London to have control similar to that which is exercised by the ratepayers of other large towns—the right to control the civil force they are called upon to pay for.

*(6.53.) MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): The hon. Gentleman has raised a great many questions of importance which, no doubt, will occupy attention, but we must not for the moment pass from the question raised by my right hon. Friend (Sir W. Harcourt) to which the Home Secretary has made a reply, the condition of the Metropolitan Force as it is to-day. We have just listened to the defence, if I may so call it, of the Secretary of State of his present administration, and the right hon. Gentleman, I am sure, will pardon me for saying I regard that defence as both incomplete and inconclusive. We are in a somewhat unfortunate position in this Debate, and I think my right hon. Friend had good ground for complaint. Full notice was given several days ago of the intention of my right hon. Friend to impugn the administration of the police, and why have no Papers been laid before us? The Home Secretary was asked to lay Papers before the House, and he was understood to say he would lay correspondence before the House, but he has not laid one line from that day to this. We have had the letter from Mr. Monro, addressed to the right hon. Gentleman, upon which I shall comment shortly, and we know that a statement has appeared in the Press that Mr. Monro did not accept the statement of the Secretary of State as correct, and Mr. Monro stated that when the House is in possession of documents the House will be in a position to form a correct opinion. The right hon. Gentleman has told the House that on June 5 there was a Memorandum presented to him by Mr. Monro, embodying the whole of Mr. Monro's objections to the right hon. Gentleman's policy. Why has the House

not had that Memorandum? In order to know what Mr. Monro's case is, the House ought to know what that gentleman has said, and said in writing. I do not think the right hon. Gentleman can claim that the Memorandum is a confidential document, because the whole relations of the past are altered, and the House of Commons is called upon to express an opinion as to whether the Home Secretary was justified or not, I will not say in driving things to an issue and to Mr. Monro's resignation, but in accepting Mr. Monro's resignation. So, I say, we ought to have Mr. Monro's statement in writing. The Home Secretary put the resignation of Mr. Monro entirely on the question of superannuation, and if that were the whole question there would be much to say for the right hon. Gentleman's position; but that was not what Mr. Monro said he resigned for. He gave four points in his letter, and the House has a right to know what were the "fair requirements and demands of the police in other important matters"—that is, besides superannuation—to which the Home Secretary would not lend an ear, and in consequence of which the Chief Commissioner resigned. The House is entitled to know what were the points of police administration on which Mr. Monro and the Home Secretary differed, and also the grounds on which Mr. Monro got the impression that Mr. Ruggles-Brise, and not Mr. Howard, was going to be appointed as Assistant Commissioner. There was a conversation in which the right hon. Gentleman says the claims and qualifications of candidates were fully discussed, and I give the right hon. Gentleman the fullest credit for desiring to do the best for the interest of the force, but Mr. Monro says the impression left upon his mind was that Mr. Ruggles-Brise was to be appointed. That is what Mr. Monro said. I do not say he is right; but I do say we are entitled to know all that passed from first to last, and then we shall know how these differences have arisen. Now, I will say a word or two about the position of the police, and I would suggest to the Home Secretary and the other Members of Her Majesty's Government that this is quite as important a matter as are many of the questions which the House is now discussing. In fact, I do not know any question of more importance to this House or the Metropolis than the condition of the police, and it is that question which the House has now to consider. My right hon. Friend the Member for Derby has criticised the administration of the Metropolitan Police by the Home Secretary, and has said that the Police Force now, for the first time, is in an unsatisfied, discontented, and unsatisfactory state, and the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary did not deny one syllable of this assertion. All the right hon. Gentleman did was to justify himself as far as he could. But what is it that the Home Secretary tells us on this head? He simply says he has heard nothing of any dissatisfaction, nor of any meetings; that he believes the police to be perfectly loyal and contented, and he uses some cheering words with regard to the Metropolitan Force. I do not suppose the Home Secretary ever reads so wicked a paper as the *Daily News*; but I may say that if the right hon. Gentleman has only looked at this morning's copy of that paper he would have seen a statement, which I will bring to the attention of the Committee. It is that—

> "A crowded meeting of Metropolitan Police constables took place last night in order to discuss the grievances of the force. The meeting was in continuation of one that took place and was adjourned a week before, and the proceedings were of a particularly enthusiastic character. All direct references to Mr. Matthews and the Government were greeted with a chorus of groans and cheers."

I am not going to read the full account of that meeting. I have no doubt there was a discussion of the right hon. Gentleman's proposals; and, when the time comes, we shall be able to see whether or not a good deal may be said for them. But the real point is, that this meeting affords evidence that the police are dissatisfied and discontented, and that they have been holding meetings of which the right hon. Gentleman says he has heard nothing. With regard to superannuation, the right hon. Gentleman laid great stress on the promises of my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby. But I must point out that the promises made by my right hon. Friend were embodied in his Bill; and on this point there can be no mistake, for I was at the Home Office up to the time my right hon. Friend left, and I know that, in the Bill he had prepared and brought in in 1885, he gave full expression to his opinion as to what were the just claims of the Metropolitan Police to superannuation. But if, as we are told, Mr. Monro raised objections to the present scheme of the Home Secretary before the Departmental Committee which has investigated the matter, and relied on the Bill of my right hon. Friend, there must have been something in the new proposals very different from those of my right hon. Friend. I have gone over the matter carefully, and I may say that the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary is practically our Bill; indeed, I may say that I think it is a little better in some important point, probably because the right hon. Gentleman has found the Treasury a little more pliant than we did; but, subject to that remark, the criticism would be merely verbal as between the two schemes, the present superannuation scheme being virtually that of my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby. This being the case, we want to know why it is that Mr. Monro was satisfied with the promises of my right hon. Friend, and yet, when before the Departmental Committee, raised objections to the present scheme, thereby bringing the Departmental Committee to a deadlock. We can see, if we read between the lines, that the Home Secretary wanted to reduce the rates. The point is, however, that the Home Secretary evidently had in contemplation some modification of terms in the public interest. All these things are part of the history of the controversy between Mr. Monro and the Home Secretary, and are no doubt fully set forth in the Memorandum of the 5th June, which, I say, we ought to have laid on the Table of the House. The Home Secretary has told us that nothing could have surprised him more than the resignation of Mr. Monro; but only five minutes later he stated that Mr. Monro had maintained a hostile attitude persistently for several months. This, therefore, was the outcome of a continued line of action.

MR. MATTHEWS: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. I did not use the word "hostile."

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: Then, Sir, I at once withdraw the word "hostile;" but I made a note at the time of what the right hon. Gentleman did say, and it was "that Mr. Monro's resignation was the outcome and result of a continued line of action," and, if this were the case, it is difficult to imagine how the resignation should have given so unexpected a shock to the mind of the Home Secretary. But the Home Secretary says there have been difficulties during the last four years as between the Home Office and the police, and when we are dealing with the administration of a force which really amounts to an Army, and with men who are virtually occupying the position of Generals, we may form some idea of the nature of the situation. We must look upon the Home Secretary as the head of that Army, and we find that under his administration, there have been, during the past four years, strained relations as between the Home Office and Scotland Yard, and the Home Office and the public. The public have been brought into collision with the Metropolitan Police during those four years, but previous to that no such occurrence has been known since the establishment of the Police Force. We all know that Sir Charles Warren was under the necessity of resigning his post not so very long ago, and now his successor, Mr. Monro, feels compelled to take the same step under circumstances which certainly demand the careful attention of the House of Commons. It was the duty of Mr. Monro to represent to the Home Secretary what he believed to be the views and wishes of the force under his command. It was not his duty to dictate, and I cannot understand that he thought it right for him to settle the basis on which the superannuation scheme should be arranged. Well, we cannot pass over this question without putting to ourselves the question: why should London differ from Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, Glasgow, and the other great towns of England and in the counties? In those places there is no friction between the Government and the police, and the police are perfectly satisfied to be controlled and governed by the Representative Bodies in the large Municipalities and counties. What is there in London which should necessitate the placing of the Police Force under a different system of administration? I know there is in some quarters a feeling which may be illustrated by what was stated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) when he said he should always support, maintain, and defend the existence of an Imperial Police Force in London under what he called Imperial administration; but I think there is a general opinion that, had the Metropolitan Police been placed under representative control, our minds would have been set at rest with regard to all the questions that have of late arisen.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven): No.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Whitehaven indignantly denies that assertion, and I ask him for some ground for his denial; I ask him or any other hon. Member opposite to name one of the large provincial towns in which there has been any collision between the police and the authorities by whom they are controlled. I had the honour of sitting on the Watch Committee of the town with which I am connected for a good many years, and I know that there the the police are able to bring legitimate public opinion to bear on the Governing Body, which is a totally different thing from what may happen in a crisis of this sort, where the police may be drawn—it will be a dangerous matter if they should be—into political action. I know of nothing which we in this House would more regret—whether in the case of the police, or the civil or military servants of the Crown—than that they should use their position as electors to approach this branch of the Legislature with a view of obtaining certain pecuniary advantages for themselves. These are questions which will arise again and again in this Metropolis until the House fairly faces the position and decides that the police of London shall be in no worse position than are the police of any other locality. I think that this Debate has, at any rate, shown—and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will pardon me for saying so, as I say it without any disrespect—that there are departments of public administration for which the Home Office is not exceptionally well-fitted. I feel that the present collision between the Home Office and the police is a very unfortunate incident. It is, of course, difficult to apportion the blame, and I am sure the House will not undertake to do so without further information. We ought to have all the papers before us. I would suggest that the best and wisest course the Home Secretary can pursue would be to take steps to relieve the Home Office, as soon as possible, from its present control of the Metropolitan Police, for which, under the circumstances which have arisen, the Home Office has shown itself to be peculiarly unfitted. As far as the Metropolitan Police are concerned, I cannot but speak of them with the highest respect, and I repeat that no man has been more generous to them than my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby. There is no indisposition on the part of those on this side of the House to do what is fair and just to the police, but we are bound to remember that our public system of pension and superannuation is a very wide system, and that we shall have to deal with other interests than police interests if we grant exceptional privileges to that Department of the Public Service. Undoubtedly the Metropolitan Police ought to be well paid, even better paid than the police elsewhere, because of the special expenditure they are put to, and because of the exceptionally hard duty they have to perform. They are, I think, entitled to a just and fair superannuation allowance. I regard the London police as an exceedingly intelligent Force, and also as a body of men actuated by the highest principles in the performance of the duty devolving upon them in the position in which they are placed. I do not say that in a Force of some 14,000 or 15,000 men there are not a few who will say or do things that are to be regretted, but I believe that, as a whole, they deserve and possess the confidence of the public. When we remember that this great city contains five millions of people, or one million more than the entire population of Scotland, and that it is kept in order by a Force of 15,000 police, I think we may say that one of the proudest features of our national life is the way in which the peace is preserved in the Metropolis. There is every disposition on this side of the House to deal with the police, not only in the fairest, but also in the most liberal manner, but we do apprehend that there is a public danger in the sustained friction which has been going on between the police and the Home Office. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary will not give us papers on the subject, and, as far as we know, at any rate, speaking what is my own opinion, this regrettable resignation on the part of Mr. Monro is not an act which will inflict great loss on the Public Service, for however distinguished may be the gentleman who is to succeed him, I very much doubt whether we shall find anyone better qualified than Mr. Monro to fill his post, while I am quite certain it will be a long time before any new Commissioner will gain the confidence of the Force to the extent that he has done.

*(7.18.) SIR L. PELLY (Hackney, N.): I merely rise for the purpose of saying that, however much we may regret and deplore the loss of the services of Mr. Monro, I cannot refrain from heartily congratulating Her Majesty's Government on the happy selection they have made of a successor to that gentleman in the person of Sir Edward Bradford. I have had the pleasure and the honour of serving with Sir Edward Bradford for many years. We were associated together in the Province of Rajpootana; and I have been more or less directly cognisant of his work under three successive Viceroys, namely, Lord Mayo, Lord Northbrook, and Lord Lytton; and I know that these three Viceroys entertained the highest opinion of Sir Edward Bradford in every respect. I do not desire to draw comparisons, but I may say that I am unable, after 40 years' service, to call to mind any officer of whom I have a higher appreciation in respect of temper, tact, patience, suavity of manner, firmness of mind, experience in the management of the most difficult affairs of the police for the whole of India, and also in regard to the peculiar genius which he has displayed in attracting those with whom he has been associated. He gains the affections of the men who work under him, and carries out his duties in a manner which, as I have already said, is in many of its characteristics unsurpassed. I know how dangerous it is to prophecy, but if I could venture to make a prophecy on this occasion, it would be that Her Majesty's Government will never have cause to regret the appointment of Sir Edward Bradford to the post of Chief Commissioner. I am sure he will endear himself in a short time to his subordinates, that he will thoroughly understand the work he has to do, and that he will bring to bear upon it an experience which will prove of the greatest value to the service of the Metropolis.

*(7.20.) MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I am sure we were all glad to hear the satisfactory testimony which has just been given to the ability of the gentleman who has just received the appointment of Chief Commissioner. But the question really is, how long is Sir Edward Bradford likely to retain the post now that he has been appointed? If he is at all like his predecessors he will go through what has come to be a uniform process. He will get into more and more difficulty and friction with the Home Office until some point, trivial or important, will inevitably arise, when the friction will become so great that he will be unable to bear the strain any longer, and his relations with the Home Office will come to an end. That is the history not only of one Chief Commissioner, but of two, namely, Sir Charles Warren and Mr. Monro, the gentleman who has just retired. The Home Secretary has made a most unsatisfactory reply to what was said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby. He has dwelt in the main on one single point in relation to Mr. Monro, namely, his dealing with the superannuation question, but I would remind the Committee that Mr. Monro has drawn attention to a long series of difficulties respecting the administration of the police and the proposed legislation, and we on this side have a right to know what these difficulties are, because that is in reality the *gravamen* of the whole matter. The question is, What have been the continued relations between the Home Office and the Commissioners of Police? To all appearance they have been such as to render it practically impossible that the Home Secretary and the Chief Commissioner could work together in peace, and where that is the case, there is, of course, an end to all good government. That would seem to be the state of things at present. Well, then, Mr. Courtney, we want to know whose fault is this. There have

been two very different individuals occupying the post of Chief Commissioner, and only one man who, at the same time, has occupied the position of Home Secretary, and yet in the case of each Commissioner the same sort of difficulty has occurred. Perhaps after we have lived through another series of troubles between the Home Office and the gentleman who has just been appointed, we may then be able to come to the root of the difficulty. Very little sympathy was expressed by the Home Secretary for the difficulties connected with the Metropolitan Police. There can be little doubt that they have grievances to complain of at the present moment—distinct grievances from a money point of view. Doubtless a good Superannuation Bill is desired by them, and I think they have a right to it. Why, then, cannot the Home Secretary carry out some satisfactory measure? It is because he has not got the money. But why cannot he get the money? That seems to be his chief difficulty, and in order to get over it he resorts to a "juggle." He has to obtain the means of creating a Superannuation Fund, but he does not wish to do this by a direct increase of taxation, and, therefore, he wants to exclude from that Superannuation Fund a certain amount which has hitherto gone into it, in order that he may be able to provide for the contemplated increase of the Police Force. By obtaining money for what he calls a Superannuation Fund, and not using it for Superannuation purposes, he thinks he will be able to get what he requires for increasing the Police Force, which is now growing at a greater rate than the rateable value of the Metropolis. This is a state of things which contrasts unfavourably with what is going on in the large towns in the other parts of the Kingdom, where the increase of the police is in a smaller ratio than the increase of rateable value. But, I ask, why cannot the Home Secretary be content to obtain the necessary funds in a direct way? It is because he would have to come to this House for a Bill which would make the Metropolitan Police Rate greater than 9d. in the £1, and he dare not do this, because, in so doing, he would be placing a hindrance in the way of public business, and because he would be dealing with the £1,500,000 of money obtained from the people of London in a way in which the money raised from the taxpayers in no other part of the country is dealt with. The result is that the Home Secretary, unable to appeal to the House of Commons, because of the hindrance to public business at a time when there are more important matters to attend to, has had, as I have said, to resort to a "juggle" in order to obtain the means. But if the Government would only consent to the placing of the Metropolitan Police under the control of the County Council, all this difficulty would disappear. If the County Council had charge of the police they would have plenty of time, by means of Committees, to manage the affairs of that body. I know that the County Council is already full of work; but it is not nearly as heavily worked as the House of Commons, and in the control of the police the County Council would have one of its principal duties. I think it a great pity that we should be under the necessity of discussing this question as we have been doing to-night; but we are obliged to consider the matter, because there is no other body having power to deal with it. I am, however, glad that this discussion has taken place, if for no other reason than that this "kick-up" between the Home Secretary and the Commissioner of Police has called forth the declarations we have heard from the right hon. Gentlemen the Members for Derby and Wolverhampton. We know now for certain that these right hon. Gentlemen are prepared to place the control of the Metropolitan Police, under proper restrictions, in the hands of the County Council, as the representatives of the people of London. I certainly think that this is the only arrangement which would put an end not only to the pecuniary difficulty, but also to the friction which arises between the police and the people in this Metropolis, and which does not arise in any other town. We have in London a discontented police and a controlling administration with which they are at variance. If you go to the other large towns of England you have neither the one nor the other. I believe that we in this House, on both sides, have the greatest respect and admiration for the Metropolitan Police. We on this side, at any rate, think that they ought to be better treated; but we complain of the way in which they are managed at the Home Office. We object to the irresponsibility of that management, and we desire to see such a change as will tend in the future to a better state of things.

*(7.30.) SIR J. GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.): I have always thought that one of the greatest difficulties any Government has to deal with is the question of wages in the case of the large staff of men employed in the various Departments of the Public Service, and that is one of the reasons why I have been opposed to extension of the trade part of the Government work. A claim has been put forward for the presentation of papers, but I do not see how any papers would throw greater light on this matter than is now possessed by the Committee. I think I can see clearly what the actual position is. Mr. Monro, with whom I have had the advantage of being in contact on various occasions, is a man of strong and determined character, and if he does not always have his own way I believe he is a little mistaken in thinking that the responsibility will fall on him. It strikes me that Mr. Monro has a little misunderstood the situation. He was certainly right in representing to the Home Secretary, as strongly as possible, his views with regard to the payment of the men, and with reference to superannuation and other matters connected with the Police Force; but the decision on these things was a matter resting with the Home Secretary, because he is the person on whom the ultimate responsibility must rest. I cannot but think that Mr. Monro made a mistake in sending in his resignation as he did, and that, but for his precipitate action, a solution of the difficulties that had arisen might have been found. With regard to what has been said about the Metropolitan Police, I have, during the last few days, endeavoured to inform myself on that subject, and I must say that I do not think they are a discontented body. On the contrary, I believe they have always been loyal and ready to do their duty. What they now desire is that their claims should be laid before Parliament, and, as far as I am concerned (although on one point I do not quite agree with them), I think there is much to be said for the views they hold. At the present moment every metropolitan policeman may enter the service at any age above 18; but the pension which is proposed by the Bill is only to count from the age of 21. The complaint of the police is that they are subject to——

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think the hon. Baronet is justified in entering into an examination of the Bill.

*SIR J. GOLDSMID: I did not mean to refer to the Bill, and the reference I made was accidental. I can, however, explain the complaints of the police without reference to the Bill. What they complain of with regard to the present situation is, that as far as the existing system goes they are only superannuated when they arrive at the age of 60, or previous to that upon a medical certificate. The demand is that they should be superannuated after 25 years' service, irrespective of the fact that they enter the service at the age of 18, 19, 20, or 21. Now, a good deal may be said with regard to this claim, and I would venture to point out that a medical officer who passes a man at 19 considers he is as fully capable of performing the duties of a metropolitan constable as a man of 21. It appears to me that——

THE CHAIRMAN: I am afraid the hon. Baronet is travelling a little wide of the question.

*SIR J. GOLDSMID: Then, Mr. Courtney, I will go to another point. In any arrangement with regard to the position of the police, as to which they say they have reasonable ground for complaint, it is quite right that the other side, namely, the metropolitan ratepayers, should be considered. Of course, we all know that the metropolitan rates have been steadily rising, and the ratepayers should not have burdens cast upon them which they cannot fairly be called upon to bear. But I believe Parliament will not have much difficulty in dealing with the matter, and that the police are prepared to discuss in the most generous spirit any claims which they may make upon the liberality of Parliament. But, at the same time, I think the leaders of the police should show, as I believe they will, a sense of moderation in the demands they make. I think most of us are inclined to agree that they should be properly remunerated and fairly superannuated. With regard to another point, which is one of considerable importance, I desire to say a few words. The right hon. Gentleman below me has said the public are frequently brought into collision with the police. Well, I may say that I have often attended demonstrations of various kinds, and what has struck me has been the very reverse of this. I have constantly had occasion to notice a kindly feeling as between the public and the police, which was really surprising. Living near Hyde Park, I have over and over again taken part in the public demonstrations held there, not as a demonstrator, but as an observer, and I have over and over again seen groups of people talking in a friendly way with the police, and sometimes complimenting them on the good feeling they have shown. Instead of the public being brought into collision with the police they have appeared to be on the most friendly terms with them. As far as the police are concerned there is this to be remembered —during the past two years, demonstrations and strikes of all kinds have taken place, and the Metropolitan Police have had to work very hard. A man has had to leave his home at 6 o'clock in the morning, and does not get home until 2 or 3 the following morning. That is very long and very hard labour, and I think the police perform it with the greatest temper and judgment. Consequently, the metropolitan ratepayers and the public at large owe a great debt to the police, who have taken this large burden upon themselves. At the time of the dock strike, for instance, a very large number of policemen were engaged. There was no ill-feeling between the strikers and the police; only, as a matter of course, when a large number of men congregate, it is the duty of the authoritios to see that a sufficient number of police attend to prevent any disturbance. Nothing occurred of a hostile nature between the police and the strikers, and, in my opinion, both classes did themselves credit. I believe the Home Secretary has no desire but to meet the wishes of the men, as far as he can, with due regard to the interests of the metropolitan ratepayers; and as far as Mr. Monro's resignation is concerned, I must say it was Mr. Monro's own fault, and not that of the right hon. Gentleman.

(6.37.) MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I think the hon. Baronet who has just sat down has put a wrong construction on what was said about friction between the police and the public. Every speaker this afternoon has been particular to say that he had no fault whatever to find with the rank and file of the police. The argument of the right hon. Gentleman the member for Derby was not with regard to the constable or the officer, but with regard to the higher authorities having the direction of the Force. It is owing to the action of the authorities at Scotland Yard and the Home Office that you have had continued friction between the police and the people during the last four years. I shall not put myself forward as so great an authority on demonstrations as the hon. Baronet the Member for South St. Pancras, though I have taken part in a few, not as a mere onlooker, but as an active demonstrator. And I have taken part in them over a long period of years, and never has there been friction on account of the conduct of the men; it has always arisen because of the orders of their superiors. I have only to go back to the 7th of this month, when I saw the police so administered, that while they were put to the greatest inconvenience themselves, they were the cause of the greatest inconvenience to the public. With other hon. Members I have taken some trouble to ascertain what are the feelings of the Metropolitan Police, and at the proper time, when the Bill of the Government is brought forward, it will be found that more than one of the Metropolitan Members are prepared to discuss the demands of the Metropolitan Police, and to see that they are justly met. The hon. Baronet has settled the whole question between the Home Office and Scotland Yard, at least to his own satisfaction. The hon. Baronet says he knows the qualities of Mr. Monro, and he knows he is virtually in the wrong. But I must say that the position of the Home Secretary would be very much strengthened if the whole of the Papers were in our hands, so that we might see exactly what has taken place between the Home Secretary and Mr. Monro. If Mr. Monro has acted in this very heated manner, that the hon. Baronet would have us believe, the case of the Home Office would have been very much strengthened if the right hon. Gentleman had put into our hands that memorandum of the 5th of July, and the whole Report of the Departmental Committee to which the Home Secretary referred. We have reached the 20th of June, and we have not yet had circulated the Report of the Chief Commissioner of Police for last year. I may be told that last year we had it, but that was because I persistently put questions to the First Lord of the Treasury that we should have this Report before the Debate took place on the Police Vote. We did get it, true, but under a new system. It had been added to the year before, but a great deal of valuable information was cut out on this occasion. I think a great number of the Members who have listened to the Debate this evening must be thoroughly dissatisfied with the defence made on behalf of the Home Office. It is very characteristic that not one of the independent Members has spoken in support of the Government excepting in a very general manner. I am not going to set up as a judge of who is right and who is wrong in the dispute between Mr. Matthews and Mr. Monro. I have no evidence in my possession to enable me to do so, and I think the Home Secretary, in withholding Papers and information, has acted in a way which will not commend itself to this House. We are told by the Home Secretary that the relations between himself and Mr. Monro were so happy that his resignation came as a cloud on a summer's day. The only piece of evidence we have had, and on which we are bound to take our stand, is what the Home Secretary has chosen to give us in the letter which he read. All we can do is to keep referring him to the fact that in this letter Mr. Monro tendered his resignation, and continually refers to other things besides superannuation and the appointment of the Assistant Commissioner. We want a more direct statement from the Home Secretary than we have had as to the real relation between the Home Office and the police. We have had two Chief Commissioners since the right hon. Gentleman assumed office. One was not his appointment, but the other was. There has been friction, and we shall continue to have friction until a reasonable course is pursued with regard to the police of London. I at once traverse the statement of the Home Secretary, that so long as you have a large body of police in London it is necessary that they should be controlled by the Home Office. We have evidence of the failure of the Home Office in the strained relations between the authorities and the police, which would never have grown up in any provincial town, where members of the Watch Committee come into personal contact with the police, and ascertain their wants and wishes. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that the House of Commons does not want to control the police. It is not supposed that hon. Members coming here for Imperial purposes can be deeply interested in the question of the control of the Metropolitan Police Force. They know that these matters are administered by the Local Authorities in the country, and when they come here to discuss serious and important questions, they do not want to have their time wasted on discussions as to right of way, or some subject of purely local interest, and that, perhaps, possessing interest to only a few of the 670 Members. Notwithstanding, we have to thank the right hon. Gentleman for having done more than any other Home Secretary to show how bad are the relations between the Home Office and Scotland Yard, and how impossible it is that the present system can continue much longer. My Colleagues have a Bill which in the result may be assisted by the action of the right hon. Gentleman. We contend that if the ratepayers had the control of the police, the Force would be more economically administered than by the central authority. I looked over the Local Government Returns the other day, and I find that the cost of the London police, notwithstanding their inadequate pay and unsatisfactory superannuation, is in excess of the cost incurred by the large provincial towns. The Metropolitan Police serve an area in which there are two Corporations, the whole of one county, and parts of four other counties. The two Municipalities at present policed by the Metropolitan Force, lose control over £13,352 out of the total expended on the police in respect of their own district.

West Ham loses control of £11,924; Hertford of £4,144; Kent £10,419; London £457,765; Middlesex £53,519; Surrey £22,000; Croydon £10,000. These figures are exceedingly interesting, as showing, because of their excess over the expenditure in provincial places, that the people of London are placed in a very invidious position compared with the inhabitants of large provincial towns. The argument is used that large buildings, like the Houses of Parliament and other national structures, must be protected. That is a concession which has been made in every Bill brought before the House. Everyone knows, and no one wishes it to be otherwise, that the Home Secretary or some Member of the Government should have under his control a body of men to watch Imperial buildings and national places, and to do the work of the dockyards, at present done by members of the Metropolitan Police. You would have then a much smaller body under one authority than you have at present. You have 15,000 policemen under one central authority. Why not adopt the principle of popular control of the police? But there is another point I wish to enforce this evening. We want a clear answer from the Home Secretary to the question I put the other day as to the addition of 1,000 police to the Force. I believe 700 have already been appointed. Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us how he is going to get the money for these 1,000 men? We want him to dispute, if he can, that he is going to put the £150,000 obtained under the Local Taxation Bills into the revenue of the police, though there is at the same time a deficit of £145,000 in the Superannuation Fund. If you do this, and I do not see from what other source you are going to get your money, then you will virtually impose on the people of London an extra rate, while evading the Statute, which would necessitate your appealing to this House for power to increase the present rate of 9d. You are evading by this means a discussion of the whole question of the Metropolitan Police on the Second Reading of a Bill. We are thus debarred from bringing before the people of London the whole question of the cost of administration of the London Police. Many of us think the cost excessive, not because we think the police are paid too highly, but because the money is frittered away on high salaries on some of the chiefs who are not required. You may tell me that I am simply making an assertion, but it is an assertion you do not give us an opportunity of discussing. I do not know whether it is worth while taking up other questions in connection with the Police Force. There are many other minor questions that we should like to discuss, had it not been for the grave and important crisis which has arisen between the Home Office and Scotland Yard, and which must now engage the attention of the House. I do think, in all seriousness, that the Home Secretary ought to give us a more clear and definite statement than he has made. If we cannot accept his statement our justification is that the Home Secretary has failed to give us the Papers which he promised, and the means whereby we adjudge of the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman. If we cannot give him a verdict of not guilty, the blame is on his side for having kept the House in ignorance of the information at his disposal.

(6.56.) SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.): I am unwilling to give a silent vote on the very important Metropolitan question that has come before us, for two reasons. The first is, that as a Metropolitan Member, I have the honour to represent a very large population very much interested in all that concerns the efficiency of the police of the Metropolis; and, secondly, I have had the pleasure for many years of being the friend and colleague of the distinguished gentleman who has, to my sorrow, recently resigned the position of Chief Commissioner of Police. I may say that I came down to the House this afternoon with a perfectly open mind on the merits of the unfortunate differences of opinion that have taken place between the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department and the late Chief Commissioner; but I must say this, also, that I came down with the full determination that, if necessary, I would speak or vote against the Government, if I found that any unfair or improper imputations were made against a gentleman of the character of my old friend Mr. Monro. But, Sir, I am bound to say that after I had listened to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, and to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, and to the other speeches from the other side of the House, the general impression left on my mind was that Mr. Monro had been guilty of, at any rate, a certain amount of insubordination to his official Parliamentary superior. I believe that I express the general opinion of the House when I assert that no insubordination of any kind can be tolerated in the Chief Commissioner of Police towards the Home Secretary But I go far beyond that and I say I am certain from my own knowledge of Mr. Monro that there is no one who would sooner repudiate the idea than Mr. Monro himself. The communication from Mr. Monro, which has been read in this House, shows that he was absolutely incapable of the conduct which has been imputed to him—at least by implication —in some of the speeches of hon. Gentlemen opposite. What did he say in that letter? Why, he spoke of his position when he found himself differing in some important points from his official superior. He said he felt it would not be fair to himself or the Government for him to remain and discuss the merits of this question as a medium between the Government and the Police. He declared that he had no wish whatever to trench on the prerogative of the Secretary of State, and I think that his conduct has shown that that is the case. I greatly regret that he should have felt bound to resign, but in doing so I maintain that he has shown himself utterly incapable of the insubordinate conduct that has been imputed to him by right hon. and hon. Gentlemen on this occasion. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green admitted —and I am glad to bear the admission— that in matters of policy the Chief Commissioner of Police should be entirely subordinate to the Secretary of State, and so, I submit, Mr. Monro showed himself to be when he found that in his opinion —whether rightly or wrongly I am not going to discuss—he could not act up to that high standard of official duty, and he felt it to be the right course to resign. With regard to the difference of opinion which has been expressed as to the details of the superannuation scheme, that scheme I take it is to come before the House on another occasion, and a full opportunity will be given for discussion. That will be the time to discuss the proposals of the Secretary of State. I am free to confess that as at present I see this proposal, I should be glad if the right hon. Gentleman could see his way to make some slight further concessions. I think there are some points—especially in regard to the two-thirds pension after 25 years' service — on which further concession might well be made. It does not seem to me that the matter is a very important one, so far as expense to the community is concerned; whilst, on the other hand, it is a matter on which the Force seem to have set their hearts. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) told us—and I am bound to admit that there was a great deal of force in what he said —that we have to consider the ratepayers on this question as much as, or more even, than the Police Force. He implied that there are more ratepayers than policemen, and that is very true. The point is one well worthy of being discussed in the House when the time comes; but it seems to me that if the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary will take the advice tendered to him to-night and will submit the financial question to a Select Committee, chosen impartially from all sides of the House, both the right hon. Gentleman and the Government on the one hand, and financial reformers like the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton on the other, will loyally accept the decision arrived at. I cordially concur in what fell from the hon. Baronet opposite in regard to the friendly feeling which exists, and which is shown on the occasion of every great demonstration, between the Police Force and the great masses of the population of London. I was present at the recent demonstration as an observer, and I have attended in the same way many great demonstrations, and I must say I have always seen the kindliest and friendliest relations prevailing between the people and the police. There is a common catch saying in use at this time: "If you want to know the time, ask a policeman." That phrase exactly expresses the feeling which exists when our poorest citizens want to know the time or anything else, they go and ask a policeman. I would endorse in the strongest terms I can command the opinion expressed by my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Hackney, as to the pre-eminent qualifications of the gentleman whom the Home Secretary has chosen to fill the place of Mr. Monro. I had the pleasure and honour of serving for years in association with Sir Edward Bradford. He was at the head of the Department for the suppression of Thuggee and dacoity — a Department which takes the place of the secret police and the Force for putting down highway robbery and robbery with violence in England—and in that capacity, and indeed in every other capacity in which he has served, he has earned the most entire respect, confidence and admiration of every one with whom he has been associated,

(8.10.) MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.): The case which has been presented to the House is one as to which it may appear presumptuous in one who is not a Metropolitan Member to say a few words, but I do so because I have given a great deal of attention to this question. We have heard the case against the Home Secretary put by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton in a very forcible and moderate manner; but I am bound to say from all that I have read and heard on the subject, I have come to the conclusion that the Home Secretary was absolutely and completely justified in the course he took with reference to Mr. Monro. No doubt Mr. Monro was an able officer with a high sense of responsibility; but his position by Act of Parliament was one of absolute and complete subordination to the Home Secretary. And no one can doubt that Mr. Monro —to put it in the least offensive manner possible—was not very agreeable to the control of the Home Office. I do not say this from any personal knowledge of the relations between him and the Home Office, but from the circumstances reported in the newspapers which are common to all of us. The Home Secretary thought he was going as far as Parliamentary usage and a due regard to the public purse justified him in the proposals he intended to make with regard to the superannuation of the police, and having regard to the various Superannuation Acts, I think the Home

Secretary has gone to the extreme of liberality. Some of us who are not Metropolitan Members will have something to say as to that when the time comes, and, perhaps, I may suggest, somewhat cynically, that it does not sound very well for Radical Members to come forward with such profuse expressions of benevolence to the police, and pointing to the public funds as the means of giving effect to that benevolence. We know that what the police require is, first, that the scale of pensions should be more liberal; secondly, that their wages should be increased; and, thirdly, that they should have better allowances for extra work, and so forth. It seems to me that the Committee can come to no other conclusion than that the Home Secretary only acted consistently with his duty to the House in refusing to be dictated to by a subordinate officer. If he had adopted any other attitude, and Parliament had assented, you would have had all Chiefs of Departments at the disposal and dictation of their permanent officials. As to Mr. Ruggles-Brise, it seems to me very curious that the Chief Commissioner should attempt to dictate to his Parliamentary Chief as to who should be appointed Assistant Commissioner. Besides, Mr. Monro's objection was not a valid one. He objected to the appointment of Mr. Ruggles-Brise because he had had no previous police experience, but the same argument might have been used in the case of Mr. Bruce, who has made a most efficient Assistant Commissioner. I think it would be wise to avoid making Party capital out of what are, after all, Constitutional questions; for it is a Constitutional question of some importance that the House should maintain the authority of the Home Secretary. I do not think that the Home Secretary has enforced, since the rupture with Mr. Monro, that discipline which ought to be maintained in the Police Force. It is not in accordance with the practice of Public Departments that the officials of a Department should be allowed to meet, in the circumstances attending the police meetings, for the purpose of bringing pressure to bear upon their chief. In the *Times* I have seen the remarkable statement that if it had not been for Mr. Monro the sergeants, inspectors, and superintendents would have continued as heretofore to keep aloof from the agitation of the ranks. I hold it to be the duty of the right hon. Gentleman to see not only that pressure is not brought to bear on him or on the public generally, but that it is not brought to bear on Members of Parliament in the discharge of their functions.

*(8.18.) Mr. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I rise to support the contention that the control of the police should be handed over to the local County Councils, and of the Metropolitan Police to the London County Council, and I would support that by referring to my experience in the City of Manchester. The control of the police there is in the hands of the Local Council and their able Chief Constable, Mr. Malcolm Wood. There is not the slightest fear there of any procession or public demonstration taking an objectionable form. I am afraid we cannot say the same thing of London, having regard to the questions which have been raised in the matter of using Trafalgar Square for meetings, and the breaking up by the police of various demonstrations; and we all know that the period of office of a Chief Commissioner for the past few years has not been longer than two years. It is singular to note what a different state of things prevails in our large provincial towns. In Manchester, on the occasion of the meetings of the unemployed recently, many of the people came from a distance outside the town, and they desired to assemble in the principal square of the city. That, however, would have been inconvenient, seeing that the square was traversed by tram lines, so the police opened their own large yard to the people who held their meetings there, and there made their protests and demanded their rights. At these meetings reporters of the local papers were present, which gave publicity to their complaints. The result was that after a couple of meetings they satisfied their minds, they cleared their breasts from "perilous stuff," and became content to let matters take their ordinary course. I think it is advisable that the police should be under the direction of the London Municipal Bodies. We know that the London County Council has shown marked ability in the administration of affairs for the last two years, and I think it most advisable that the control of the Metropolitan Police should be confided to them.

(8.21.) Mr. G. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I should like the Committee to bear in mind that very recently a Bill was carried through this House, mostly by the pressure of hon. Gentleman opposite, for the enfranchisement of the police. Yet, in the face of that, we are told they are not to meet to discuss their grievances. To my mind, it is an absolute farce to give men the right of voting and to deny them the right of free discussion. It seems to me they had a right to meet and discuss the provisions of a Bill that will affect their future prospects, and to make known through their officers their objections to it. In saying this I am not at all supporting the idea of the police officers of the Metropolis binding themselves together at public meetings under leaders who may lead them to destruction. That is, however, a very different thing from being permitted to discuss the provisions of the Bill. I think no provision that may be made for superannuation will make up for the smallness of the pay given to the Metropolitan Police. Hon. Members on both sides have been very profuse in their acknowledgments of the services rendered by the police officers of the Metropolis to the public. I would also bear testimony to the same effect if there was any need for my doing so. It seems to me, however, to be an absolute farce to talk about the way in which these men perform their duty, and, at the same time, to give them a miserable pittance which is scarcely up to the level of what a day labourer would have. I would make superannuation something contingent upon good behaviour, length of service, and things of that kind. I think a man should have sufficient pay, and that it should be his duty to save out of his earnings sufficient to keep him in old age. There might be exceptions to this; but, speaking as a general rule, I do not believe in superannuation allowances. I believe in paying a man a fair day's wage for a fair day's work, and I think that will prove, in the long run, to be better than the superannuation system. I do not wish to say anything with regard to the gentleman who I presume has been appointed to the post of Chief Commissioner, but I am afraid we are going to make the same mistake as we have been making over and over again by appointing a military man Governor of a civil force. That has been the cause of the collisions in this Metropolis between the police and the people, and the people and the Home Office, for many years past. We do not want our Police Force to be under military regulation. It is not by any means a military force, and it will be a bad day for England, and for this Metropolis particularly, when, if ever, it is made into anything like a military force. If the Home Office wants a military command in the Metropolis, it should hand over the command of the police to the Horse Guards or the War Office. I want to see collisions between the police and the people avoided; and I think they can only be avoided in two ways, first of all, by getting rid absolutely of the military element, and, secondly, by handing over the control of the police to the proper local authority, namely the County Council. (8.29.)

(9.0.) Captain VERNEY (Bucks, N.), rose——

(9.0.) Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

*(9.3.) Captain VERNEY: I cannot join in the general chorus in praise of the police, and indeed I venture to think that the police have very decidedly deteriorated of late years. Since I was elected a member of the County Council, I have taken some trouble in going about to different parts of London, to specially note the attitude of the police, and I will venture to say that, during the last 10 years or more, since I have known the police, their conduct in remote parts of London has not been civil and courteous to the public at large. Many instances of this have come under my personal observation. I know nothing is to be gained by quoting individual cases, but I give the Committee my distinct impression which may be accepted for what it is worth. As to myself, wherever I am known, I am treated with the greatest respect and attention by the police; but the police should not discharge their duties as the servants of the few who are known in public life, but they should remember they are the servants of the public at large, and in that sense I do not think that the conduct of the police is satisfactory. I had the grief and sorrow of seeing from a very safe place the conduct of the police on the day of the Trafalgar Square riots, and it was sad to witness. I am not going to apportion the blame to the processionists or to the police, but I do not think such a thing had been seen in London before, or in any of our large towns, within living memory. I do not think there is a parallel case of the police, who are the servants of the public, attacking the people, not merely in pursuance of orders preventing the people from passing, but breaking away from their position to attack members of the procession, smashing band instruments, and destroying flags. These proceedings I saw with my own eyes, and I do not think the people of London, after such proceedings, can ever regard the police as they did before, a feeling was then excited, which is to be lamented as a misfortune. It is my opinion, then, that the police of London have of late years not improved, but deteriorated in general attitude and tone towards the general population of London, and I wish to add a word or two as to the control of the Metropolitan Police. I am quite sure that the noble Marquess (Lord Carmarthen), the Member for Brixton, has not a chance of being returned as Member for that constituency again unless he is in favour of police control being placed in the hands of the County Council. This is only my opinion, but it is founded upon my knowledge of what the feeling in that constituency is as its representative in the London County Council. I know that there is the strongest feeling there in this direction among Liberals and Conservatives alike. Something has been said about the police not being in a proper state of discipline, and I think the Committee will see that while there is a doubt in the minds of the police as to who their masters are, and are likely to be, this in itself tends much to shake the discipline of the force; but now that Members on the Front Opposition Bench have declared in favour of County Council control, no

doubt this must have an effect on the minds of the police. I can speak from experience as to the change in two counties where I happen to be a Magistrate. In Anglesey there has been a very marked change in the attitude of the police since control has been transferred to the Joint Committee, since the County Council have had a voice in the government. I have no doubt the Government know perfectly well that they cannot, that they dare not, employ the police in Wales to enforce the collection of tithes. The County Councils would not allow it, and it cannot possibly be done. You may pass what Bills you like, you may make what arrangements you please, you may send troops, but you cannot employ the police to collect tithes, because the County Councils will not have it done. The attitude of the police in Anglesey is the attitude of servants of the public, and that is the difference between provincial police and the London Police. Anybody who has anything to do with the police in Anglesey will find them acting as the respected and trusted servants of the public; but that is not, I am sorry to say, the attitude of the police in London. There is a feeling among the population of London that the police are trying to be their masters, and undoubtedly there is a sort of affectation of superiority of position about the police that is to be deplored. I regret the change in the police uniform, which abolished the old form of the civilian hat they used to wear, which was a symbol of the civilian character of the Force, that though charged with special duties they are not our masters, but our servants and assistants. I sometimes sit on the Magisterial Bench in Buckingham. We have there a very Tory County Council and Joint Committee, and more than once in public from the Bench I have had to complain of the attitute of the police towards witnesses and prisoners in Court, an arrogant and overbearing demeanour, inconsistent with their official position, and which ought not to be tolerated. I have no doubt at all that the London County Council will before long have the control of the police. I do not think there can be any doubt of that after the expression of opinion from the Front Bench on this side, and when that change comes I anticipate there will be no difficulties with the police, but perfectly harmonious action. From no county in England and Wales have there been complaints of the efficacy of the police since control passed to the Joint Committees, and I do not think there is any reason to complain of the Watch Committee in any borough. I look forward, then, to the perfect efficiency of the police, harmony of action, and absence of friction under the control of the London County Council in preserving peace and order in the streets of the Metropolis.

*(9.12.) MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I wish I had had the opportunity of speaking more immediately after the statement of the Home Secretary. I listened very attentively to what the right hon. Gentleman said, and, if he will allow me to say so, I admired his fine forensic effort, while I congratulated myself to some extent that I was not one of a jury to be influenced by what he will excuse me for calling the special pleading with which he favoured us. This question we are now discussing, and which I, for one, regret, should occupy the attention of an Imperial Parliament holding the view which has generally been expressed on this side that it is a matter for the London Local Authority. This matter we are now discussing is not merely one of the quarrels and dissensions between the Home Secretary and his various Chief Commissioners. I am not greatly concerned, however many of the latter resign, nor should I be very much concerned if the right hon. Gentleman himself resigned. I frankly add that I should not entertain greater anxiety or cherish greater hope in regard to any right hon. Gentleman from this side of the House who might succeed the right hon. Gentleman in the office if all went well. These are matters of little importance beside the grave importance of the fact that discontent exists among the force responsible for the peace and safety of the Metropolis. Now, the Home Secretary—and I am bound to say he did it admirably well—tried to minimise this feeling among the police, and, to some extent, he succeeded in diverting the attention of some Members of the Committee—not of all, I

am glad to say, who have taken part in this discussion. The right hon. Gentleman has deprecated and denied statements founded upon reports in the newspapers, and wishes us to believe, in fact, that the agitation we hear about is manufactured by newspapers. Now, we know that newspapers—or some of them—when short of "copy" especially, are apt to insert matter that does not stand the test of close examination; but I can hardly believe it possible, when we read reports in all sorts of newspapers of every political complexion, newspapers differing in tone, such as the *Standard*, *Daily News*, *Telegraph*, and *Globe*, and when we find everyone of these newspapers, most of which, I presume, are fairly independent, has a full and succinct account of proceedings at meetings which have taken place among members of the Police Force in reference to their grievances, and the dismissal of Mr. Monro, I cannot but think that the Home Secretary "doth protest too much" when he tries to make us believe that these troubles are manufactured by the newspaper. I find in the *Globe*, which is considered to be a Conservative newspaper, a full report of a meeting which took place last night. Now, no one can accuse the *Globe* of being an exceedingly revolutionary newspaper; it does not, so far as I am aware, suggest the abolition of the bourgeois in five and twenty minutes, or to nationalise our means of production; it is a newspaper, I suppose, whose reports may fairly be relied upon. I find in the *Globe's* report of yesterday's meeting that 160 constables drove to the meeting in vans, and that they were addressed by various speakers. I am well aware that some of these speakers are members of the "Social Democratic Federation," a body with which I am in no way connected, but I suppose they have as good a right to address a police meeting as any other persons, though I find the meeting was not only addressed by members of the "Social Democratic Federation," but by other gentlemen of position, and by members of the force; that they discussed questions at some length; and that after the meeting was over 40 or 50 policemen went away cheering for the "Policeman's Union," and expressing great dissatisfaction with the conduct of the Home Office officials. Let me show what it was this meeting of policemen demanded yesterday. A resolution was carried as follows:—

Mr. Cuninghame Graham

> "That this meeting of constables of Metropolitan Police demand—(1) That an increase of pay of 3s. per week be given to each class. (2) That each man be entitled to advancement in class at two and five years' service. (3) That one day's leave per week be granted. (4) That police court time and extra duty be allowed in full. (5) That P.C.'s be entitled to 10 days' leave annually. (6) That one-third of pay be the minimum of pension on completion of 15 years' service, increasing proportionately to two-thirds of pay after 24 years' service. (7) That each man be entitled to claim his superannuation on completion of 24 years' service."

I will not enter upon details which will be far more properly discussed upon the Police Superannuation Bill; but what I wish to point out, and what I wish to bring before the attention of the Committee, is the fact that the condition of the present relations between the Police Force and the Home Office is such as to create grave danger to the safety of the Metropolis. It is absolutely, I think, a matter that admits of no argument at all, that you have a large body of some 14,000 or 15,000 men upon whom the onerous duty is laid of protecting persons and property in the Metropolis day after day and night after night; it is absolutely impossible they can exercise that duty properly if they are in a state of what I must characterise as semi-revolt against the authorities. I wish the Home Secretary clearly to understand that dissatisfaction in this instance, so far as I am aware, has not been promoted by agitators. I know that the right hon. Gentleman entertains a distrust of agitators, and that, founded or unfounded, that feeling of distrust exists in the country; but, arguing from the existence of this distrust, the case is much stronger when I assert, and the right hon. Gentleman cannot contradict the assertion that there has been no intervention of agitators to account for the strained relations of the police and their superior office to the Home Office control. If, therefore, this dissatisfaction arises from among the Police Force itself, it seems clear to me that either the Home Office has not sufficient time or opportunity to exercise due supervision over such an important body as the Metropolitan Police Force such as should be exercised; or that the just claims of the force have been ignored. I am not going exactly to uphold Mr. Monro against the Home Secretary for the very cogent reason mentioned by my hon. Friend the Member for Finsbury that we have not the correspondence in our hands which would enable us to take a full view of the case. I am not one of those who think that in all cases the Chief Commissioner should be backed against the Home Secretary. Bad as I think the system is which places the supervision of the London Police Force in the hands of the Home Secretary, I think that a state of things which placed absolute power in the hands of a Chief Commissioner without due supervision of the Home Secretary, and therefore the influence which debate in Parliament exercises, would be absolutely untenable, and no sensible man can for a moment contemplate it with equanimity. On this occasion, and in reference to police control, I do not entirely take the side with Mr. Monro or against him, but I do lament that in the choice of Mr. Monro's successor a most unfortunate selection should have been made of a gentleman half of whose record is a military one. We have been told by hon. Gentlemen on the other side that he has been most diligent and successful in the detection of Thuggee and dacoity; but these are crimes which, if I am well informed, are not very prevalent in this Metropolis. Further, I understand this gentleman was for a long time Resident in Rajpootana. Now, the Rajpoots are, ethnologically, a highly interesting race of the highest caste in India, though I wish to do others no injustice. But what are the functions of a Resident in Rajpootana? In this State, I believe, there is an admirable art school. There may be found large quantities of elephants, and I believe some very skilful Nautch girls. Upon these and other matters a resident may form his judgment, and has to make representations to the Sultan of the country; and I believe this particular gentleman—whose name for the moment has escaped me, but which I daresay in future I may remember accurately—has had vast experience in matters that appertain to Court life in Rajpootana; but I utterly fail to see how such experience gives him qualifications for such different and delicate duties as are involved in the position of Chief Commissioner of Metropolitan Police. It has been urged by hon. Members on this side, and notably by one who holds the position of County Councillor, that the only way out of these difficulties—difficulties that appear to be arising perpetually, if we may judge by the short tenures of office by Chief Commissioners—can be obviated by transferring control to a popularly-elected body, the County Council; and various Members have referred to the good effect that has accrued in provincial towns where recourse has been had to such a system. But hon. Members have forgotten one especial fact in this connection, that when there was an election of County Councils, some 18 months ago, it was made a test question in many cases, invariably, I believe, in the case of Progressive members, that they should pledge themselves to the principle of control of the police by County Councils. ["No."] I am not sure whether the test was not applied by electors who voted for Conservative members—["No."]—but I think upon County Councils Conservative members are in as decided a minority as they are in a majority in this House. But let that pass. If the ratepayers of London are really averse to the control of the police being placed in the hands of the County Council, as an hon. Gentleman opposite says they are, how does it come about that in so many instances elections were determined upon this question? Surely, it will not be urged for a moment by any hon. Member that the electors and ratepayers of London are so foolish, so blind to their own interest, that they would absolutely vote for power being placed in the hands of a body they look on with feelings of distrust? It is because they see these strained relations, the existence of which the Home Secretary cannot deny, between the Home Office and Scotland Yard, that the vast majority of London ratepayers are so set upon having the control of the Police Force, which costs £1,700,000 annually. A word upon what has been said as to the altered relations between police and people in London. I know that to the great majority of Members of this House it is not of very much importance whether the Police Force arrogates to itself more power or remains in the position it has hitherto occupied. Most of us, fortunately—I am myself an exception—do not habitually come into collision with the police. I do not mean to say I do so habitually—but most of us do not often come into contact with the police, their functions, so far as we are concerned, being limited to opening cab doors and attentions of that kind. But with the vast bulk of the poorer population of London the case is different. Police supervision and police interference can make their lives intolerable to them. I appeal to any hon. Member who has knowledge of the labouring classes in London whether there is not grievous complaint of the interference in the daily life of the poorer population which is gradually being arrogated to itself by the Police Force. For these reasons I view with exceeding regret the appointment of another military gentleman to the office. From a Constitutional point of view I do sincerely regret the introduction of the military system into what has always been a civil force. I foresee that if military discipline and system is introduced into the Police Force, the scenes of riot and disorder, and the strained relations between the Home Office and Scotland Yard, which have existed for three or four years, will become intensified, and the time of Parliament, which should be devoted to subjects vastly more important, will be taken up more and more every Session with the discussion of questions which should be dealt with by the London County Council.

(9.32.) MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I shall not express any opinion as to the newly-appointed Chief Commissioner, as I should prefer first to see how he fills the office. And, with regard to the issue raised between the Home Secretary and Mr. Monro, as I have only read the letter of Mr. Monro and heard the speech of the Home Secretary, I feel I have not got sufficient *data* on which to pronounce an absolute opinion, but, with such *data* as I have, I am inclined to believe that the Home Secretary is right in regard to the matter of the resignation of Mr. Monro. A question seems to have arisen with regard to police superannuation. But the Home Secretary is the Representative of Parliamentary control with reference to the police, and I hold that it is most essential that the Home Secretary should have this control so long as the police depend upon Parliament, and not upon the County Council. The question which arose was as to the amount to be granted to the police. I never yet heard of value attaching to the opinion of those who are to receive pensions. Of course, the Commissioner and the police, being themselves interested in the question of superannuation, would naturally take a very favourable view of the matter in discussing it; but what happened? The Home Secretary prepared a Bill and showed it to Mr. Monro, who objected to it, and said that if the Bill was not altered he should resign, and because the right hon. Gentleman did not make the alterations which were demanded Mr. Monro did resign. Now, I do not recognise that sort of thing as the duty or the right of the Chief Superintendent or Commissioner. If the Bill is a bad Bill, it is for this House to criticise and discuss it, when the Bill is brought in. The Home Secretary in the discussion would have stated whether the police approved of the Bill or not, but for the Commissioner to menace, I may say, the Home Secretary with his resignation is contrary entirely to my idea of the subordination that the Commissioner ought to observe to the Representative of Parliamentary control. This Police Force is a positive army. What, I should like to know, would be the state of things in the Army itself were the House to set up the Commander-in-Chief against the Secretary of State for War? Of course, we should support the Secretary for War. I put aside politics altogether, and I say that so far as I know the details of the dispute, the Home Secretary is in the right, and his power should be upheld so long as Parliamentary control remains. Until the police are placed under the control of the County Council, I shall always act upon that principle. I think that Chief Commissioners are very much inclined to take too much upon themselves. Were they in the House it would be different, but now, in police matters, the House has to complain not to the Chief Commissioner, but to the

Home Secretary, who has to bring in Bills affecting the police. Unless we act on this principle there will be an end to all Parliamentary control, and we shall have the police becoming a sort of Prætorian Guard, and the Commisioner a sort of Prætorian Prefect, completely dominating this House and the whole Legislature. I think it the duty of all who share these opinions to back up the Home Secretary in his action; otherwise there will be an end of all Parliamentary control. I now come to another point. I find that the Commissioner's salary is £1,500 a year, and I doubt whether it would not be wise, seeing the position that official holds, the duties he has to discharge, and the large force of men he has to command, to grant a larger salary. But I have heard that Mr. Monro received £1,000 a year from the Secret Service Fund. Does the right hon. Gentleman who shakes his head positively say that Mr. Monro received no money from that fund? As I understand, Mr. Anderson did receive a considerable sum from that source for looking after detective business in America in regard to Irishmen, but this has been discontinued since he became Assistant Commissioner, and the duties have since been undertaken and the money received by Mr. Monro. This is most objectionable, if correct, and we ought to know exactly what the salary of the Commissioner is.

*Mr. MATTHEWS: The Commissioner receives nothing but what appears on the Estimates. He has an Indian pension.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will go a step further, and inform us who is now at the head of this detective business in America?

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! That hardly arises on the Vote.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: There are Assistant Commissioners. I want to know whether any of the Assistant Commissioners receive anything from the Secret Service money?

*Mr. MATTHEWS: No person down on the Estimates for a salary receives anything in addition to that salary.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: That is an answer; but I should like to know the relations of the police of Scotland Yard with the police and others in America. There was a discussion in this House some time ago about the position of Mr. Hoare, our Consul in New York. It was shown that Mr. Hoare had had communications from England in regard to police matters, and that he took up a position as a sort of head of the Detective Department in the United States. I believe I am right in saying that that business has been handed over to Mr. Fraser, Vice Consul, and I think we ought to be informed——

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I do not see how that is relevant to this Vote. It might be raised on the Vote for the Home Secretary's salary.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Well, I will drop that point; but there is another in which I confess I am myself a little interested. There is a policeman of the name of Jarvis, who has brought an action against me for saying he was at a certain place at a certain time in America. Now, I want to know from the Home Secretary whether Jarvis is to pay for this or the police? I do not object to the police paying; but if I win my case, and Jarvis cannot pay, I want to know whether the Home Secretary, or someone in his Department, will pay the expenses? I do not know whether or not Jarvis has been put forward without any money against me; but I know that the action may cost me £1,000 or £2,000, and I want to know, if I win my case, to whom I am to look for my expenses. If Jarvis is being supplied with funds by the police I think the Home Secretary will admit that if I win I ought to have my expenses from those who are supplying him. As Jarvis's salary is included in this Estimate, this is the time to raise the question.

*Mr. MATTHEWS: No; it is not included.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I think it is included in this Estimate.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

Mr. LABOUCHERE: As I have exhausted my criticisms, I may as well sit down.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order. There is no salary in the Vote beyond that of the Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners.

*(9.42.) Mr. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): I am sure all hon. Members will agree with me that these frequent acri-

monious discussions with regard to the London Police are not only most distasteful to those who take part in them but most injurious to the well-being of the police and of the people of London. It is not that the people and the police cannot get on well together, but it is the abominable system which exists that causes the trouble. Now that we have a London County Council, we say that the police should be placed under its control, in the same way as the Municipal Bodies in other cities and towns have control over their police. The people of London have made up their minds that they will no longer allow their police to be controlled by the Home Secretary, be he Liberal or be he Conservative. With regard to Mr. Monro's resignation, the hon. Member for Northampton seems to be in possession of more information than we have got. We have only the statement of the Home Secretary.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I specifically said I knew nothing beyond the letter of Mr. Monro, and the statement of the Home Secretary.

*MR. CAUSTON: Then we are all in the same position. Whether the Home Secretary be right or wrong, I desire to say that the present system is bad, and we want to see it altered. That system brings hard and distasteful work to the police; it brings the Home Secretary into disrepute; and there is no doubt that the ill-feeling between the police and the people will also bring about what we think is an unnecessary demand for an increase of the London Police Force. The only remedy is to place the police under the control of the London County Council. I quite admit there may be a necessity for a Government Imperial police. If the Government want a force for the protection of the Public Offices by all means have one, but do not let us have a police dictatorship in London. Place the London police under the control of the London County Council, and you will establish good-will between the police and the people, and ease the labours of the Home Secretary. Of course, we cannot now discuss the details of the Superannuation Bill. The police render special services, and should be specially treated; they look after our property and our

lives; they give themselves up to their work almost in the same way that the clergy devote themselves to looking after our souls. Superannuation, no doubt, attracts respectable men to the Force; but if in the Bill you are going to take away with one hand what you give with the other, you will do no good. What you want is a contented police, and if you have that you have a trustworthy and reliable force. I cannot understand why the Metropolitan Police should not be as well paid as the City Police. It is absurd to say that the Metropolitan Police could not be controlled by the London County Council, for the City Corporation manages its own force. In the City you have most valuable property requiring protection, and you never hear of the City Police being inefficient or discontented. I do hope that in the interests of the Home Office, for the sake of the peace of mind of the Home Secretary, in the interests of the welfare of the people of London as well as of the police generally, this short-sighted policy in regard to the management of the police will be abandoned.

(9.52.) MR. PICTON (Leicester): I should be glad to have an explanation of the item of £650 for the travelling expenses of Inspectors.

(9.53.) MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I desire to ask an explanation of the item of £48,000 for clothing and other expenses of constables employed in the protection of public buildings and on other special duties. I have reason to believe that the special duty of some of these gentlemen was to go to Colorado in the interests of the *Times* before the Special Commission, and while pretending to be on holiday engage themselves in finding out a large number of mares' nests. We know it has been denied, but we know also that the denials were false, for we had men there as well as Her Majesty's Government. Differing from some of my hon. Friends, I was delighted when I heard of Mr. Monro's resignation. The more these permanent officials are put down the better. Mr. Monro made himself specially offensive to Irish Members. His conduct in connection with the Select Committee in regard to the hon. Member for North Louth was abominable. Therefore, the moment I heard that Mr. Monro had resigned I was greatly delighted. It is always a good thing to get rid of the last man. As to the alleged payment of secret service money to the Chief Commissioner, I think we ought to know more on this matter. We know how it once transpired—although it had been denied—that a sum of £10,000 had been used in securing Parliamentary candidates. We are also aware that when there is a change of Government these things are sure to leak out, and we should like to know where it is the Chief Commissioner gets his perquisites from, if not from the Secret Service Fund. If he receives anything in addition to his salary it should appear on the Estimates. I agree that the salary attached to the office ought to be raised. I heard with some surprise the statement the other night that the Force was to be increased by 1,000 men. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby increased the Force at the time of one of the explosions which occurred, I believe, on the day of the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race, the right hon. Gentleman said that if the people of London wished the police to be specially engaged for their protection when they were out enjoying themselves they would have to pay for it, and it would be necessary to add to the Force. It was proposed to strengthen the Force on a former occasion, solely on account of the presence of dynamitards in the Metropolis. But the right hon. Gentleman is proposing an increase at a time when practically there is no crisis and no kind of disturbance. This second addition will make an increase of 2,000 since five or six years ago, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby was the Home Secretary. Of course, if the men are over-worked, and have been kept on duty too long hours, it is quite right that an increase should be made. Still, I think the Government make an increase in circumstances which require very much more explanation than is afforded by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. This advance in the number of the police is really effected in a backstairs sort of manner, so that the cost may not come on the Estimates. I do not know how these things are arranged in London, but I gather that there is no check whatever on the right hon. Gentleman, or on the number of men who are to compose the Force. I deprecate the observation of my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton with reference to setting up a Force in London, which is to be treated as a sort of Prætorian Guard. That expression was used by the Royal Irish Constabulary when they struck in 1882. Allow me to say that the two bodies are very different. The police of London, like the police of Dublin, are of a pacific temperament, and are not supplied with bayonets and rifles, and powder and ball. They live amongst a civil population, and do not segregate in barracks. They are not subject to that close military discipline which prevails in the Irish Constabulary, and I do not believe that there is the slightest desire on the part of the London police in any way to set themselves up as against the civil population. Having lived now for a long time in London, I may say that a more respectful body of men I do not believe ever had control of the streets of any Metropolis in the world. They are civil to a fault. It is not as if they knew you. Of course, coming about this House, one may expect extra attention. But wherever you go the police of the Metropolis are universally, extremely, and consistently polite and courteous in their duty. That shows the advantage of having a domestic Police Force, uncontrolled by stringent military discipline, which prevails in the Royal Irish Constabulary. I think it would be a very unfortunate thing if any excitement were allowed to grow up among the constabulary in London, or if they were induced to combine in a hostile sense against Her Majesty's Government, because if, instead of moderate agitation, they were to take hostile means for the redress of their grievances, I believe they would only set the general body of the population against them, and the general body of the population is now largely in sympathy with them, and most anxious for the redress of their grievances. I believe that if the Government can at all manage to see their way to meet the just and fair demands of the men, the people of London, and the Members of this House, so far as the Estimates can be laid before them, would be prepared to go a long way in soothing down and dissipating the grievances and irritation of these men. I deprecate the suggestion of any attempt whatever to set up a Prætorian Guard.

*(10.6.) THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART WORTLEY, Sheffield, Hallam): The hon. Member has asked a question with regard to an item of £625 which appears on these Estimates as travelling expenses of Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary. I can assure the hon. Member for Leicester that these expenses have nothing to do with journeys to America. They are the expenses of the officers whose duty it used to be, before the Local Government Act, to satisfy the Home Secretary of the efficiency, not of the Metropolitan Force, but of the provincial force, and whose duty it is since the Local Government Act, to afford information upon which can be given the certificate that is required before contributions can be made to the Local Police Authorities from the Imperial taxation, which has been transferred to local purposes. The performance of that duty involves journeys to every county and every police borough in England and Wales. The hon. Member for East Finsbury (Mr. Rowlands) inquired why the Report of the Department Committee upon superannuation had not been produced. I do not know whether he was in the House when the Home Secretary spoke. If he was he must have noticed that the Home Secretary distinctly said that the Departmental Committee separated without making any Report, on the ground that Mr. Monro, most unhappily for the interests of the police and their administration generally, thought it his duty to separate himself from the deliberations of that Committee. As regards the Annual Report of the Chief Commissioner, which some hon. Members say ought to be issued at an earlier period of the year, in order that the House may have it in its hands when the Police Vote comes before it, I can assure him that I heartily sympathise with him in that desire. But the Commissioner of Police is most heavily burdened with the most anxious duties, and it is found in practice—I could quote precedents for many years back—that the Annual Report never can be brought out much before the month of August or September. It is true, I believe, that on one occasion it was got out, but the Police Vote was taken at a very late date. Since the disappearance of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, the Debate has somewhat quitted the lines on which he sought to launch it. I had no doubt as to the result, and I felt sure that the very general concurrence which has been expressed in all parts of the House as to the conduct of my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary with regard to the unhappy differences which have arisen, would be endorsed and approved by the great majority of this House. The Debate has since proceeded on the familiar lines of a discussion of the Utopian idea of municipal control of the Metropolitan Police. I have always noticed up to the present evening that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby has been most careful to guard himself against anything like an approval of the municipal control of the London Police as against Imperial control. But on this occasion he has selected, if I may say so, the body of my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary to make a bridge whereby he may cross from one country to the other, deserting all the opinions gained in the hard experience of office, that he may travel in a more convenient and pleasant land, in which he can gain electoral support. For my part, I maintain that this House, 80 of whose Members are elected by constituencies in the Metropolitan Police area, while the other 590, by the very condition of their holding seats in this House, are residents in that area, is the most effective Watch Committee we could have, accustomed as it is to investigate questions of far larger importance and financial difficulty than are those connected with the Metropolitan Police Force. Not only that, but I maintain that there is quicker responsibility and sensitiveness to public opinion under the present conditions of control of the police than there would be were they controlled by the County Council, whose debates do not attract the attention nor involve the tremendous political consequences which attach to debates in this House on acts of the Executive. We have heard to-day of the discontent

which is supposed to reign in the Metropolitan Police Force. I have watched the government of that Force for four years, and having had relations with the Superior Staff, which I should always have been glad to have, I am bound to say that I am very sceptical about the reports of general and widespread dissatisfaction in the London police. There is not the smallest doubt that there has been a great deal of cooked up appearance of it in the newspapers; the number of the meetings has been exaggerated, and I am not quite sure that there have not been reports of meetings which have never taken place. Sir, I think better of the Metropolitan police than to suppose they would engage in anything like the kind of agitation in combination with outsiders in which they have been represented in some prints as being engaged. I feel certain that, when reasonable discussion is allowed of their claim on the one hand, and of the efforts which are being made to satisfy them on the other, in the end we shall arrive at a just and satisfactory settlement of the claims of the police, with due regard to the interests of the ratepayers of London. I wish, Sir, that hon. Members had been inclined to let this subject alone. They come here, and with a light heart ask us to grant certain demands for additional pay and allowances for the police. I must say I feel inclined to ask them whether they have gone into the question at all of the additional burdens on the ratepayers? I believe were we to seriously entertain the demands of hon. Members the cost would involve a burden upon the ratepayers, much greater than the bulk of them are prepared to bear. I have said what I have with a full sense of the value of the services of the police. Let it not be supposed that we do not recognise the good temper with which the police discharge their duties in all sorts of difficult circumstances in all hours, and in circumstances of hardship and exposure. At the same time, Sir, every proposal of this kind must be examined not under the circumstances of political and electioneering pressure, but in the cool atmosphere of a strict examination of the financial consequences of the proposals that may be made. I hope, Sir, after this discussion the Committee may possibly be disposed to allow us to take this Vote, which, I can answer, will not be taken as giving the Government any encouragement or commission to deal otherwise than fairly with a Force which has immense claims upon the gratitude of the people, and as regards which I do not believe the statements that are made by certain gentlemen who sit in certain quarters of this House and represent them as being out of harmony with the people amongst whom they live.

*(10.20.) MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Perhaps I may, as a Metropolitan Member, be allowed to say a few words in reply to what has fallen from the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for the Home Department. He says we have been engaged in a philosophical discussion, but whether that be so or not, one result of the Debate has been that it has brought the question of the control of the Metropolitan Police by the London County Council more than ever within the range of practical politics. One of the arguments by which the case brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby has been met, is that the House has been engaged in considering an ideal and Utopian system of a municipal control over the London Police. That I suppose means that the municipal control of the police, which answers so well in the great provincial towns, is ideal; and, at any rate, if it be ideal there the idea is one which might well be extended to the Metropolis. We object to these local Metropolitan questions occupying the time and attention of the House to the exclusion of the great Imperial questions with which it has to deal. We do not believe they can be properly discussed and decided in this House, and we think that they ought to be handed over to the representatives of the ratepayers in the County Council by whom they will receive proper consideration. The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for the Home Department has said that 80 Members of this House who represent Metropolitan constituencies are resident in the Metropolis, have so strong an interest in its affairs, and may be relied upon by the ratepayers for the efficiency with which they will guard the interests

of the constituencies in this matter; but I would point out that by far the greater portion of the Metropolitan Members occupy seats on the other side of the House, and that with but one exception none of those 60 or 70 Conservative gentlemen have spoken on this question this evening, although it is one affecting the discipline and the whole position of the Metropolitan Police. I cannot blame hon. Members opposite for not having taken part in the Debate this evening as the time has only, with great difficulty, been wrested from other matters of importance, and no one desires that the discussion should be continued at any great length. Still it is unfortunate that we should be confined to one solitary evening in the entire Session for the discussion of the whole question of the Metropolitan police, and this fact is in itself proof sufficient that these questions do not receive that consideration from the representatives of the London constituencies which they ought to receive. These are matters which do not affect the House of Commons as much as they affect the ratepayers; and the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary is greatly hampered and controlled by Acts of Parliament in dealing with them. At the same time, the ratepayers, who have to pay by far the larger portion of the cost of the police, have no direct voice in the decision of these questions. I will not, at this hour, go into the general question. I will only say that I think the real *gravamen* of the charge we make against the Home Secretary is not so much that he exercised the final control—for we are all agreed that he ought to exercise full control over the Chief Commissioner so long as he is responsible for the Metropolitan Police in this House—as that these difficulties which have arisen ought never to have been allowed to get to such a head. We say that the right hon. Gentleman has shown now, as in former times, when we have had to discuss questions connected with his office in this House, that he is out of touch with the police and those having authority in that Force; and that he is unable sufficiently to control it, as is proved by the discontent which prevails among the men. The Under Secretary for the Home Department denies that there is discontent in the force. Nobody believes or wishes that that discontent should come to a serious crisis; but that there is a large amount of discontent I think few in this House will deny. That discontent has, we say, arisen from the strained relations between the Home Office and the Police; and we cannot but attribute the fact to the action of the Home Secretary himself. We, on this side, are all agreed that the right hon. Gentleman might have handled the force with greater discretion and ability, and our experience of the way in which these questions have been handled in the past has shown us that he is altogether out of touch with the Force generally. This has brought us more and more to the belief that the only way in which the most important and vital questions relating to the Metropolitan Police can be properly discussed and decided is by placing that Force under the control of the Representative Council for London.

(10.27.) MR. PICTON: The Committee was strongly disposed to pass this vote at once when the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department rose to make his speech; but the hon. Gentleman has contrived to say several things which necessitate an answer, and so, therefore, to some extent, has prolonged this Debate. I do not think that the hon. Gentleman was justified in the attack he made upon the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, in his absence, and I must object to the sneering remark that since the right hon. Gentleman had left the House the discussion had taken a more proper and natural tone. The right hon. Gentleman was only doing his duty in bringing forward his case against the action of the Home Department. From his experience of the Department, and the high position he holds on the Front Opposition Bench, he was bound to bring before the Committee the profound uneasiness which exists in the public mind, and which has been occasioned by the friction which has subsisted between the Home Office and Scotland Yard, and, in fact, between the Home Office and the Police Force generally. I am, however, bound to say that the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary made a very able and temperate and also a very successful defence; but this does not, in the least degree, condemn the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby for having brought forward the case he has advanced. If we have a case to bring forward but are never to raise it in this House unless we are infallibly certain that there is nothing to be said on the other side, there will practically be an end to all Debate. It is for us to state our case and hear what the other side has to say. If what is said on the other side is sound and satisfactory, we acknowledge it, but we are not to be blamed for stating our case as we receive it from the regular sources of information. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary went, I think, a little out of his way in casting scorn upon the idea of our committing the Metropolitan Police to the care of the County Council. He made use of this singular observation—that this House is the best "Watch Committee." What does he mean by calling this House a Watch Committee? I suppose he knows what is usually meant by the Watch Committee of a Town Council? The Watch Committee is not the whole Council. It is a small body selected from among the members of the Council because of their special knowledge of the duties of the Municipal Police. They are personally acquainted with the Force and they know the needs of the different districts in their towns and boroughs, and generally are well qualified to carry out the functions devolving upon them. The idea of comparing this House, composed of Representatives of constituencies from John o'Groats to Land's End, as well as from across the Irish Sea, with an ordinary Watch Committee of a Town Council is the very height of absurdity. Beyond this, the right hon. Gentleman passed a slight upon what he termed "the small political consequence of the London County Coucil." What we say is, that it is precisely because of its non-political character that the London County Council is the body best fitted for the duty of undertaking the control and management of the Metropolitan Police. But then the right hon. Gentleman said this House was more sensitive to public opinion. I suppose he was thinking of the vote of last night. The London County Council is in direct and intimate touch with all parts of the Metropolis. Remarks have been made about the kindness and attention of the police, but there is something to be said on the other side. The men are good, but the system is thoroughly bad. In a force of 15,000 men, all cannot be perfect, and the system is likely at times to bring out the worst side of the character of the most arbitrary and passionate among them. The system leads them to believe that they are in many respects antagonistic to the democratic movements of the time. They are taught it is their business, as far as possible, to put down all open-air meetings. They think they are the opponents of extreme Radical opinions or Socialism, as the case may be, and their action at times, when there are great assemblies of the people, is likely to irritate rather than conciliate. The recent meeting in Hyde Park affords one illustration out of many of the irritating manner in which the police are often made to act. I say "made to act," because I am quite sure that, under an ordinary Municipal Government, their own nature would lead them to do nothing of the kind. Those who attended the Hyde Park meeting could see that the police were made to interrupt it and to minimise the public demonstration of opinion as far as possible. It is continually my misfortune to have to walk home through the streets very late at night, and I cannot help noticing the action of the police. I have repeatedly seen police constables needlessly interfere with the harmless jollity of people who, perhaps, had had a little too much to drink, but who were good humoured enough if they were only let alone. I remember two police constables at the corner of Tottenham Court Road, seeing three young men coming along Oxford Street singing, and seizing them by the shoulders, and pushing them across the street until they nearly fell on their faces. Cases are continually reported in the newspapers of men being run in at police stations without any special reason whatever. Several cases have occurred in which Police Magistrates have said they could not decide on which side the blame lay, but they strongly suspected the action of the police. I do not say that these cases cast doubt on the general character of the police, but they illustrate my contention that the tendency of the system is rather to aggravate the worst features of the worst disposed men among them. The police ought to be a terror to evildoers, but not to ordinary citizens in the exercise of their ordinary rights. The police ought to be recognised everywhere as the friends of the people in all their legitimate enterprises. The present state of things has given rise to considerable friction and irritation between the police and the people of London, and I do not believe this will ever be cured until the police are put under the management of the London County Council.

*(10.36.) MR. GAINSFORD BRUCE (Finsbury, Holborn): I should not have risen to address the House but for the challenge of the hon. Member opposite. We are told that we have not attempted to answer the case that has been made against the Government. We on this side of the House are not in the habit of making unnecessary speeches, and we thought it was useless to answer remarks which, so far as they required an answer, have already been answered by some of the hon. Members sitting opposite. I agree with what has been already said, that the frequent and acrimonious discussion of matters of this kind does not tend to the public advantage, and it seems to me that no facts have been brought forward to justify the charges which have been made.

*MR. C. GRAHAM: Does the hon. and learned Member deny that there is dissatisfaction existing among the police?

*MR. G. BRUCE: Yes, I do deny it. I venture to think I know as much about the police than Gentlemen opposite. I have been in constant communication with them of late, and I deny absolutely that there is any dissatisfaction amounting to disloyalty among them. It is true that attempts have been made to stir up dissatisfaction among the police, but those attempts have failed. It is said on the other side of the House that the people of London want the control of the police made over to the London County Council. The people of London want nothing of the kind. The people of London think the London County Council, as at present constituted, a most extravagant and inefficient body, utterly unable to confine its attention to its own business, and vainly meddling with the business of everybody else.

(10.40.) MR. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse): I came to the House prepared to blame the Home Secretary, but, after listening to the Debate, I think my right hon. Friend deserves to be praised and supported. I am not satisfied that there is sufficient discipline among the higher ranks at Scotland Yard. In these matters there can be no such thing as dual control; and if there has been any want of discipline, from Mr. Monro downwards, it is right that the Home Secretary should have put down his foot firmly. We are anxious that the superannuation allowances of the police should be ample, and even generous; but I think that hon. Gentlemen opposite would have been the first to complain of the Home Secretary if he had attempted to induce the House to accede to the suggestions of Mr. Monro. This is an occasion when, with every sympathy for the police, we must put confidence in the Home Secretary, and that confidence I hope hon. Members will show by their votes.

(10.44.) MR. T. M. HEALY: I think I am entitled to an answer to the two or three words I used earlier in the Debate.

(10.45.) MR. MATTHEWS: The hon. and learned Member wished to know whether Jarvis was paid out of the sum allotted for special duties. He has not been paid one penny out of that fund, nor has the sum of £1,000, or any sum whatever, been paid to Mr. Monro.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman has answered me in one way and not in another. I asked how it was that this man Jarvis was enabled to pay this visit to Colorado, and how it was that a certain journal in this country had a man placed at its disposition, when it was pretended that he was on his holiday. When this man got to New York he was detached from that place by the Consul there and sent to Colorado. It is all very well to say that this man gets nothing under this Vote, but we are entitled to complain of the system whereby officers can be employed in this manner. What was the man doing in America? Can it be pretended that an ordinary policeman could take a holiday in New York—a man who has only a salary of some 25s. a week? If this Vote is the only Vote in the Estimates for this purpose, it is singular that the expenses of police officers in occult and extraordinary duties can be screened, and that the House can have no check upon them. It is an undoubted fact that this man went to America in the service of the *Times*, and yet it seems there is no means of checking the amount of money paid. If it was necessary to send this man away would his expenses be paid out of the Secret Service Fund and not out of this Vote? This is an attempt to blind Parliament. We have two grounds of complaint in the fact that Jarvis was detached in the service of the *Times*, and that Mr. Monro compelled this unfortunate man by a threat of dismissal to bring the libel action against the hon. Member for Northampton. Now that Mr. Monro has gone, I suppose that Jarvis will drop this action, because I do not imagine that this gentleman from the Crimea will be very much interested in the dignity of Mr. Monro, or in the maintenance of the truth of his letter to the *Times*. Jarvis will now have some peace. Hitherto his life has been made miserable. He had to back up Mr. Monro and the Home Secretary, and was compelled to make a statement to the effect that he was never in America at all, or at all events, only in New York for a short time—these words having been put into the mouth of the Home Secretary by Mr. Monro. I wonder whether the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary has the same idea of the truth of Mr. Monro that he had, or whether he will receive that statement with some discount now that Mr. Monro has been compelled to resign. The Home Secretary made his statement to the House, I presume, on the authority of Mr. Monro; but did he attempt to probe the statement to the bottom? I would suggest that he should get this new General whom he is placing in charge of the Police Force to ask this question of Jarvis whether, as a matter of fact, he did make this journey to Del Norte? Mr. Monro now is in rather low water, but he has a following amongst a certain section of the police and the public, and I would point out to the Home Secretary that it would further discredit him to get his successor in office to question Jarvis and find out whether, as a matter of fact, he went further West than Mr. Monro informed the Home Secretary. In this way the right hon. Gentleman can go a long way in the direction of discrediting the general way in which Mr. Monro discharged his ordinary duties. Will the Home Secretary say distinctly whether Jarvis went to America on Scotland Yard business or for a holiday?

The CHAIRMAN rose to put the question.

(10.55.) Mr. T. M. HEALY: If I receive no reply to my question, I shall move, Sir, that you report Progress.

(10.55.) Mr. MATTHEWS: I have over and over again stated to the House that Jarvis did not go to Del Norte, Colorado. What is the use of asking me what fund he was paid from?

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Did he go to New York?

Mr. MATTHEWS: He was not paid out of this fund, and he did not go to Colorado. I have given the hon. Member the best information I can. I do not know why Jarvis went to New York. I should think he went on public business. The suggestion that he went on his holidays is a pure joke. It is as incorrect a statement as the rest of his version of this affair.

(10.57.) Mr. T. M. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman has affected a very fine anger, but I can assure him that, so far as I am concerned, I am completely indifferent to it. This is a matter which has been raised several times before the House by the hon. Member for Northampton and the Irish Members. The right hon. Gentleman suggests that I was joking when I asked if Jarvis had gone to New York on a holiday. I was doing nothing of the kind. The statement was put forward either by Jarvis or his official superiors. The right hon. Gentleman gets up to reply to me in a splendid frenzy; but let me tell him that if he wants to gets his Vote it is not by frenzy that he will get it. The right hon. Gentleman says he does not know what Jarvis went to New York for; but the right hon. Gentleman ought to know. He was three times questioned about it by Metropolitan and other Members, and he ought to have taken the trouble to inform himself. He knew the Police Vote was coming on, and ought to have known that this question would arise. It will be raised again and again until the right hon. Gentleman finds out where Jarvis went to. The matter in relation to Jarvis's visit to Colorado was not made clear until after the Debate upon the Special Commission Report. The right hon. Gentleman must not suppose that the matter is going to be hushed up. If we cannot raise it on this Vote, we shall raise it on other Votes. There is one great distinguishing feature which we possess, and that is that when we start a question we thrash it out. I ask a specific question. Will the right hon. Gentleman put to Mr. Monro's successor the question addressed to himself as to the visit of Jarvis to Colorado?

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I really think I must deprecate this discussion. Jarvis has brought an action, and the matter is before a Court of Law. Of course, I cannot express an opinion on the subject; but I believe I am in no way compromising Jarvis when I say I understand that, as a matter of fact, Jarvis was at the time in question on leave in America. At any rate, if a man brings an action he should have an opportunity of thrashing the question out in Court; it is hardly fair to Jarvis to prejudice the case by discussing it here. But there is a little matter of a personal nature in regard to which, perhaps, the Home Secretary will give me some information. It is, whether Jarvis is bringing this action with his own money, or using the public's money—my money as a taxpayer? I do not want to press hardly on this man. I dare say he is not well off, and I have not the slightest objection to the Government giving him money. But I protest against Jarvis being put forward in this case. I assume that I shall get a verdict, and that that verdict will carry costs. ["Oh, oh!"] Yes; it is an action for libel, and a verdict would carry costs. Well, I do not want the Government to give Jarvis money with which to bring an action against me, and then when I get my costs to be told that Jarvis has no money. It is only fair that if the Government provide Jarvis with money to bring the action, they should pay me my costs.

Mr. MATTHEWS: The answer I gave to a question on this subject before was that Jarvis would bring the action at his own risk and cost. Perhaps the hon. Member for Longford will accept the reason given by the hon. Member for Northampton why I should not subject Jarvis to cross-examination. I have given the hon. Member all the information I can.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: The fact that an action has been brought against the hon. Member for Northampton is no reason why information should be withheld from us. The Irish Members are entitled to have the information I ask for, irrespective of any action against a newspaper proprietor. In my opinion, this man was sent to America to do the *Times'* business; and in order to mark my sense of the manner in which the man was sent out I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question, 'That a sum, not exceeding £37,586, be granted for the said Service,"—)*Mr. T.M.Healy,*)—put, and negatived.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

EDUCATION CODE (1890) [GRANT].

Resolution [June 13th] reported,

"That it is expedient to authorise an additional Special Grant, out of monies to be provided by Parliament, to certain Elementary Schools, in pursuance of any Act of the present Session for making operative certain Articles of the Education Code, 1890."

(11.15.) Mr. PICTON: I do not see the Vice President of the Committee of the Council in his place, but I wish to urge upon the Government the point I raised in Committee, namely, the permanent stigma that is being cast on teachers who have not passed through a training college. These teachers only count for 50 scholars, while those who have passed through a training college count for 60 scholars. I have shown how very strong is the feeling amongst teachers of this class. I have shown the unreasonableness of setting up an arbitrary test of this kind in place of a practical test, and I think the point might be further considered. The only answer made by hon. Members opposite has been that if there is a deficiency of training college accommodation for Nonconformists, it is only for Nonconformists to put their hands in their pockets and build additional training colleges. That sounds very plausible; but hon. Members forget that Nonconformists have to put their hands in their pockets for a vast variety of objects which are already provided for members of the Established Church without any cost to themselves. Nonconformists have to build all their own places of worship and keep them up without any endowment provided for them by the State; and besides, the training colleges under the Church of England receive ——

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is now discussing the Code. This is only a formal Resolution. The Education Code is down on the Paper later.

MR. PICTON: I understand this is a Resolution to make special provision for items of the Code. I shall object to this Report being received by the House, unless I have some assurance that this matter will be further considered. I do not ask for a promise that I shall get all I require; but I do want a promise that the matter will be re-considered. The teachers feel themselves aggrieved by this odious distinction.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is quite out of order. He will be able to discuss this question when the Code Bill is before the House. This is purely a financial matter.

MR. PICTON: Then my only resource is to move the adjournment of the Debate. In the hope that I may get some explanation or assurance as to the application of this money, I beg to move the adjournment of the Debate.

*MR. SPEAKER: It is unreasonable to move the adjournment of the Debate for the purpose of discussing a point that can only be discussed on the Code Bill, and, therefore, I hope the hon. Gentleman will not persevere with his Motion.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, E.): I think we are entitled to know from the Vice President of the Committee of the Council what are the particular items for which this grant is asked.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): This is purely formal. It is really to enable the House, later on in Committee, to provide the means for proposals in the Code Bill.

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I submit a question of order to you, Mr. Speaker? Let us take the case of the Budget Bill. That Bill goes through several stages. On the Budget Bill the different arrangements are discussed, with Mr. Courtney in the Chair. I presume this Resolution provides the ways and means by which the Bill can be worked. That being so, I would respectfully submit that on this Resolution it is in order to discuss the Code itself.

(11.22.) SIR W. HART DYKE: The necessity for the Resolution arises in this way. There is a proposal in the Code that certain grants shall be given for poor schools in rural districts, and this is the money clause.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I think my hon. Friend (Mr. Picton) is labouring under a misapprehension. This does not touch the training colleges at all.

MR. T. M. HEALY: For the sake of safeguarding the rights of Members, I beg to ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether it would not be in order to discuss the clause of the Bill to which this Resolution relates?

*MR. SPEAKER: No doubt it would be; but my observation was that this is not the Resolution on which the whole Bill is founded, but only a Resolution with regard to this particular clause.

Resolution agreed to.

BARRACKS (CONSOLIDATED) FUND.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the charge on, and issue out of, the Consolidated Fund of any deficiency which there may be in the moneys provided by Parliament for the payment of the principal and interest of any sums borrowed by the Treasury, under the provisions of any Act of the present Session for building and enlarging barracks and camps in the United Kingdom and in certain colonies.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

INLAND REVENUE REGULATION (RE-COMMITTED) BILL.—(No. 211.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 to 10 agreed to.

Clause 11.

(11.27.) MR. PICKERSGILL: I have to move an Amendment on this clause. The 1st sub-section imposes a penalty on anyone who obstructs a Revenue Officer in the execution of his duty. To that I have no objection. The 2nd sub-section, however, provides that if on the hearing it is proved that a defendant has unlawfully committed an assault, he may be convicted of the assault, though the charge contained in the information may have broken down. I object very strongly to that provision, because it appears to me to violate an elementary principle of justice, inasmuch as it enacts that a man who is charged with one offence may be found guilty of another. I object mainly in the interest of poor men who may happen to be defendants. The case of the rich man, who comes into Court attended and protected by a cloud of counsel, is different. It appears to me that under this section a poor man, knowing, of course, nothing of the law, might be convicted of an offence to which his attention had never been called during the hearing, and which he might have means of disproving. In justice to the Government I ought, perhaps, to say that the Bill was submitted to a Committee, on which there were three very eminent lawyers from this side of the House. They apparently have allowed this curious innovation upon criminal practice to pass unchallenged. The hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) is one of those to whom I allude, and I am rather surprised that he allowed it to pass without challenge. It appears to me it is still more likely to produce injustice in Ireland than in England. Now, in the first place, I do not see why in a matter of criminal procedure an officer of a Government Department should be treated with special indulgence as compared with a private person, who, failing to secure one remedy, has to commence proceedings *de novo.* I do not see why there should be an exception for an official who has at command a lavish supply of the best professional advice. If an assault is committed, a conviction can be obtained under the 1st section of the clause, for it would by its nature be an obstruction if the officer was in execution of his duty. But if the officer was not in the execution of his duty, why should he be specially protected? I think it may lead to insolence and Jack-in-officeism not to be encouraged. There are precedents, it is said; and I admit that there may be in regard to indictable offences. For instance, in the case of a man indicted for embezzlement, if it turn out that the act does not in law amount to embezzlement but is really larceny, then the defendant can be convicted of larceny. But I want to point out this, that, in the case of an indictable offence, it is some act in connection with and part of the offence in its legal aspect; but under this section it may apply to some different act altogether which might be brought against the defendant, and he might be convicted of it. The words of the section run—

> "If upon the hearing of the information it is proved that such person unlawfully committed an assault."

Surely the hon. and learned Gentleman will agree that the words are very loose and slovenly. When? Upon whom? Under what circumstances? In what relation to the offence originally charged? Really, under these words, it appears to me, the defendant might be convicted if he committed an assault upon his wife long before. The hon. and learned Gentleman shakes his head, and I put an extreme case, but only to show how loose and slovenly is the language of the section. So far as words go, it would appear that if it could be shown a man had committed an assault long before then, under the words of the section, he might be convicted of that assault. Then there is a difficulty to which I invite the attention of the Solicitor General. Summary jurisdiction in respect to common assault depends on the complaint made by, or on behalf, of the person aggrieved, and dismissal or conviction is a bar to all other proceedings for a similar cause. Now, I want to put a question to the hon. and learned Gentleman. Will a conviction for a common assault under this section be a similar bar, or will it not? Whichever answer the hon. and learned Gentleman gives will, I think, be unsatisfactory. It is a logical dilemma. If the Solicitor General replies "yes," then the person aggrieved is deprived of the option secured to him by the general law of a criminal or civil remedy; if "no," then the defendant is liable to be twice prosecuted for the same cause, contrary to the protection extended to persons under the general law, in cases of common assault. This is a fair illustration of the inconvenience of these casual incursions upon well-established principles of criminal justice. I understand that, before the Committee, it was urged that this subsection should be introduced in the interest of the defendant himself, and that is a plausible argument I desire for a moment to deal with. It was said acquittal does not absolutely discharge the defendant; he may still be proceeded against for assault, and that, under the present law, he is put to the inconvenience of having to appear and bring up his witnesses on a subsequent day. Well, let us see whether that argument advanced in the supposed interest of the defendant will hold water. I venture to think it will not, and for this reason: At the close of the hearing on the charge of obstruction, defendant is there in Court, and he can be charged instanter with the commission of assault; and if he does not object, the Court then and there can proceed to hear and determine. That, the hon. and learned Gentleman will not dispute, is Common Law. No doubt there are conditions under which the defendant might object, but *ex hypothesi* the defendant will be anxious to have the case settled then and there. I am rather jealous of these innovations. I think there is a tendency at the present day in the direction of laxity in legal procedure, a reaction, no doubt, against the pedantic formalism of other days; but I think a little too much laxity has shown a tendency to invade our Department of Criminal Law, and against the danger of this I make my protest. I have had some conversation with the Solicitor General on this subject, and he, in the most courteous manner, promised to explain his own view, and has even gone so far as to say that, if I am not satisfied with his explanation, he will be prepared not to press this alteration in our Criminal Law.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 13, to leave out all the words from the word "hearing" to the word "accordingly" inclusive in line 20.—(*Mr. Pickersgill.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

(11.40.) THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir E. CLARKE, Plymouth): It is of so much importance that this most useful Bill, which has been so carefully considered, should be allowed promptly to pass into law, that I did say, and I am quite prepared to stand by it, that if the hon. Member feels it necessary to make a resolute opposition to this clause, I would rather yield on the point than lose the opportunity of passing the Bill. I said I hoped, and I still have that hope, to be able to satisfy the hon. Member that the alteration is a useful one, and in the interest of those persons whom the hon. Member has taken under his protection—that is to say, persons charged with offences of this kind who, for the most part, are poor persons. Such persons could now be charged with the offence of molesting, obstructing, or hindering an officer in the execution of his duty; and if it turned out that the officer was not strictly in the execution of his duty at the time, and that it really was a common assault, the Magistrate would be obliged to dismiss the charge originally brought, and then a new summons would be taken out and the defendant would get no costs. The defendant would have to answer that summons, the same facts would be repeated in evidence, and he could be convicted on the second summons. The only effect of this clause is, that if the facts proved before the Magistrate show that a common assault was committed, but not upon a man in the execution of his duty, the matter could be dealt with at once on the facts, and without the necessity of a second summons and a second hearing, but the result would be the same as if there had been both. The hon. Gentleman has suggested that it might be on different facts, but that cannot be. If the hon. Member will look at the words of the section he will find that if on the hearing of the complaint against any person it is proved such person knowingly committed an assault, he is not entitled to be, and will not be, acquitted by reason of the failure to prove the offence in the first instance. The clause indicates that the Magistrate must take into consideration the facts given in evidence on the first information, and he is limited to this consideration. It is said that punishment may be inflicted for assault upon some one else, but if the hon. Member will examine the words, he will see that is not possible. It is a charge of obstructing an officer in the execution of his duty, but if it be proved that the officer was not in the execution of his duty, then the defendant may not be wholly acquitted for his action, but is liable to be convicted for common assault. The alteration is a reasonable and practical one, and I do not believe it can injure anybody. I think it will be an advantage so to amend the law, but, as I said before so I say now, if the hon. Member desires to press the matter, I think the remainder of the Bill is of so much importance that, rather than imperil its passage, I will yield the point and allow the Amendment to be carried.

(11.45.) MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): If the hon. and learned Gentleman is willing to abandon the words, I need not take up time with argument in support of the Amendment. ["Agreed."] Do I understand the subsection will be abandoned?

SIR E. CLARKE signified assent.

(11.45.) MR. T. M. HEALY: The Solicitor General takes a very moderate attitude. Although I was a Member of the Committee which passed the Bill, and recognise that it is extremely desirous that the officers of the Department should be armed with strong powers in the execution of their duty in the prevention of smuggling, I am glad the hon. and learned Gentleman can see his way to accept the Amendment. I do not want to press my views, but I do think there is a great hardship in the manner in which such strong powers are given the Authorities against the ordinary citizen, while if the latter brings an action against an official, the official is hedged about with extraordinary protection. Observe that in case of conviction of offence against the officer, the Magistrate has no option but to inflict a fine of £100, not a fine up to that sum, it must be £100. While this protection is given to the officer of the law, if an officer of the law knocks down anybody in precisely the same manner, look at the way in which the officer is protected. Under Clause 28 the complainant must bring an action within three months, and then he must give notice of action, which, of course, is a technical thing, and then on the offence contained in the notice the defendant may plead not guilty by Statute and may make tender of amends. Now, all subjects of Her Majesty should be equal, and no man should have privilege beyond that of an ordinary citizen if he knocks me down, and I submit these distinctions are not justifiable. According to the Common Law Procedure Act the plea of not guilty by Statute was abolished. It was revived by Judge's Rule in Ireland, but it is a monstrous thing, while an official is hedged about with so much protection, that an aggrieved person, in an unofficial position, should find so much difficulty in obtaining redress. In Committee it was regarded as a very strong measure indeed, but the Government in Committee were assisted by some very able gentlemen, who represented the views of the Department, and the Committee yielded; but I must say I think there is rather a tendency to over-departmentalise under the influence of gentlemen suffering from what the Americans call "swelled head."

Question put, and negatived.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 12 to 27 agreed to.

Clause 28.

(11.52.) Mr. T. M. HEALY: I venture to make an appeal to the Solicitor General whether, in these modern days, it is not desirable to drop out such a provision as this. The House and the Committee have shown themselves willing to arm the Executive Authority with ample powers for carrying out their important duties, and this is a most useful consolidating Bill; but I appeal to the Government that when on the one hand they make it impossible for the Magistrate to mitigate the penalty on the subject, the subject should not, on the other hand, be so tightly fettered in bringing an action. I look with suspicion on any attempt against the Common Law. No doubt, executive officers have had this protection for many years, but have they not had it long enough, and has not the time arrived when such protection is no longer necessary? It would be well, when the Department is getting such valuable concessions as this Bill affords, that the Department should show that they do not wish to insist that their officers should have any more protection than other persons can claim when acting with illegality. I will not make any Motion until I hear what the hon. and learned Gentleman may have to say, but I am sure if a spirit of concession is shown there will be no difficulty about the Bill passing.

(11.54.) Sir E. CLARKE: I am sorry I cannot consent to the omission of the clause, and I hope the hon. and learned Member will not press that upon the Committee. He is aware this is a Consolidation Bill, collecting into one Bill provisions scattered over several Statutes in a manner that made the administration of the law somewhat cumbrous and difficult. The penalties and the provisions in the Bill do not involve any alteration in the law for the protection of officers in carrying out their duties. I hope the hon. Member will not press for the exclusion of the clause now. I cannot consent to that in this Consolidation Bill. If an amendment of the law should hereafter be thought desirable, the matter could be very readily dealt with. I would ask the hon. Gentleman to let the Bill go through now.

(11.55.) Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.): I am sorry I do not see my way to accept that suggestion. I suppose, as the Government is in possession of a large majority, we must bow to their decision; but we could amend the clause considerably if the Committee would give attention to it. In Sub-section A I will move the omission of the word "three," in order to insert "twelve." I am afraid not many Members opposite have the Bill in their hands. Sub-section A declares that no action shall lie unless commenced within three months after the cause of action, and in addition to that there must be a month's notice of action, which, practically, reduces anyone who brings an action against an officer of the Inland Revenue to a period of two months. That is a very short time, and I think it would be only reasonable and judicious to extend the time to 12 months. The Solicitor General says we are only consolidating the law from several Acts on the Statute Book, but I remember when I was on the Committee which dealt with the Criminal Law we found in that Committee the usual difficulty that the Government have, in consolidation, always the temptation to improve the law at the same time, and all the Departments rush in and want the Act made more severe. It is rarely you find a Government with sufficient good sense to resolutely confine the Act to consolidation. If they would do that, and not attempt to improve the law, they might do much in eliminating Acts from the Statute Book and making the law more clear. But they try to improve upon the existing Acts and make the law more severe, and this Bill is an instance. This, I think, affords a fair opportunity to provide that the Inland Revenue should not have the special protection afforded by this limitation of time.

Amendment proposed, in page 10, line 32, to leave out the word "three," and insert the word "twelve."—(*Colonel Nolan.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'three' stand part of the Clause."

(11.58.) **Dr. KENNY** (Cork, S.): I beg to second this Amendment. It is obvious that a man may receive very serious injuries in a contest with an officer of the law, and may not for many months discover the extent of them. Yet, practically, the officer escapes liability if the action is not brought within three months. I think the Solicitor General might make some concession on this point, and take advantage of a Consolidation Bill to make an oppressive law less oppressive. As the Amendment is in that direction, I support it; and I hope the hon. and learned Gentleman, if he cannot accept 12 months, will agree to extend the time to six months.

(12.59.) **Sir E. CLARKE**: I hope the hon. and gallant Gentleman will recognise that we are acting upon the suggestion he himself made, and in a Consolidation Bill wish to consolidate and not alter the law. This clause is not an alteration of the law, it is a repetition of what is on the Statute Book. It is extremely important that in respect to actions brought in respect to alleged assaults there should be a proper limit, and I hope in a simple Consolidation Bill the hon. Member will allow the clause to remain as it stands.

It being midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACTS AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 239.)

Bill read the third time, and passed.

PHARMACY ACT (IRELAND) (1875) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 241.)

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I wish to explain that my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork has withdrawn his objection to this Bill on the understanding that the hon. Member for North Longford will move his Amendment on the Report stage.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Of course, it is understood that the Member for South Belfast will facilitate us as regards the Report stage.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Certainly.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 2.

Dr. TANNER: I hope it is perfectly understood that the hon. Member for South Belfast will give every possible facility to enable the Medical Profession in Ireland so to deal with this Bill as to pass it in the form in which it will meet their necessities.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I have great pleasure in giving that pledge.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): But if this Bill passes through Committee without amendment will there be an opportunity of amending it on Report?

The CHAIRMAN: If there is no Amendment there will be no Report.

Clause agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Clause 22 be omitted."

Agreed to.

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered upon Wednesday next.

DEVOLUTION OF ESTATES BILL.—(No. 125.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged; Bill withdrawn.

LAND REGISTRY.

Copy ordered—

"Of Return showing the nature of the fees amounting to £3,828, received by the Land Registry Office in the year ending on the 31st day of March last, and distinguishing the amount received in respect of the registration of titles."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 240.]

House adjourned at ten minutes
after Twelve o'clock till
Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 23rd June, 1890.

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF CLARENCE AND AVONDALE.

THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN reported, That the Lords with White Staves had (according to order) laid before Her Majesty their Lordships' Resolution of Tuesday last, relating to the place and precedence of His Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence and Avondale in this House; and that Her Majesty was pleased to say She would give directions for a chair or seat to be prepared for His said Royal Highness on the left hand of the Cloth of Estate.

His Royal Highness Prince Albert Victor Christian Edward of Wales, having been created Earl of Athlone and Duke of Clarence and Avondale, was introduced between His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, the Garter King of Arms, the Earl Marshal, and the Lord Great Chamberlain attending, and was placed in a chair on the left hand of the Throne.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACTS AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Read 1^a; to be printed; and to be read 2^a to-morrow.—(*The Lord Balfour.*) (No. 122.)

THE ATTENDANCE OF PEERS.

*LORD RIBBLESDALE, in rising to call attention to the attendance of Peers in the House of Lords, said: My Lords, I have noticed lately in all the speeches I have read the extreme popularity of what I believe is called the historical argument. I feel that in this proposal which I am about to bring before your Lordships' House I am in some danger of fulfilling in my own person an historical illustration. In the year 1789 an indirectly celebrated character, a certain Dr. Joseph Guillotin, devised the use of that instrument of death which was at once called by his name, and in 1792 Dr. Guillotin himself was within an ace of putting into motion in his own person the machinery he had devised. Now, my Lords, I am afraid that I might myself be the first person to come under the operation of the proposal which I am going to develop to your Lordships, but there is this difference between Dr. Guillotin and myself, that whereas Dr. Guillotin was, more or less, the victim of the vexatious circumstances which surrounded him, I, under this proposal of mine, keep my fate actually in my own hands. I think it would be very desirable at once to divest the Notice which I have put upon the Paper of vagueness, and to explain the naked principle of the idea which underlies that Notice. Mr. John Bright advised somebody who asked him to suggest a good rule for making a forcible speech, to confine himself to one idea, and I propose to confine myself, as far as possible, to one idea this evening. To put it into the very plainest English, I am going to ask your Lordships to consider whether it might not, for many reasons, some of which I shall endeavour to give, be advisable to consider the expediency of making a Vote in a Division in this House during any Session depend upon a certain number of attendances during the Session immediately preceding it. To put it still more clearly, I will take the case of Lord A (whom we will consider a purely imaginary personage) and a few hypothetical dates. Lord A, we will say, has not attended a certain number of times represented by X in 1891. He would appear in a list in 1892, which could be prepared by some impartial authority from an available source, for I believe our attendances are already recorded on the Journals of your Lordships' House, as having lost his right to vote during 1892; but Lord A during 1892 could redeem his right by his attendances during that Session to vote again in the Session of 1893. That, my Lords, is the principle of the proposal. Of course, the smoothness of working of a principle of that kind depends upon a great many details, and the consideration of details, I think, depends upon a stage of deliberation, which in this case

I am conscious may never be reached, but which I should like very much to see reached. If Lord A happened to be an ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs, or an ex or present Master of Buckhounds, the fulfilment of those duties might be considered grounds of exemption; and I think if Lord A was Chairman of Quarter Sessions or Board of Guardians, and did a great deal of useful work for his county, that might be again a reason for exemption, or if he were travelling in the colonies, or was away from ill-health, those also would be reasons for exempting him; but exemptions of that kind do not at all, I think, affect the general principle which I put before your Lordships this evening. I may, perhaps, say here that I would not, of course, expect from any of your Lordships an expression of anything like approval of the proposal this evening. People like sometimes to have time to make up their minds upon any subject, while other people dissent quickly—generally speaking they approve more slowly. Therefore, all I propose to do this evening is to make good my case as far as I am able; and if I receive anything like a measure of encouragement, say within 10 days or a fortnight's time, I would bring up a Motion and carry it to a Division for the appointment of a Committee to consider how far the proposal is reasonable and useful, and to report to the House upon it. I may remind your Lordships that this course was followed in 1868, when the question whether proxies should be continued or discontinued was referred to a Select Committee of this House, the deliberations of that Committee resulting in a Standing Order doing away with proxies which has never been repealed, and is still in force. I am very clear myself that, assuming any need of reform in your Lordships' House, that reform should begin within the House itself. I do not think any reform which necessitates an Act of Parliament is a reform which can be wisely considered. I think if we could devise any reform which would make the House more useful, and which could be carried out in the form of a Standing Order, such reform should be carefully and wisely considered. Upon that point I should like to quote a very eminent authority, Sir Edward Coke, who says:—

> "Whatever matter arises concerning either House of Parliament, ought to be discussed and adjudged in the House to which it relates, and not elsewhere."

Well, my Lords, I think there may be two cardinal objections to this proposal, which I shall try to anticipate. Those objections will probably come from two sets of people, representing different opinions. Objections may come from a section of your Lordships who may say—"We grant there may be some value in your proposal, but we dispute altogether the possibility for this being done by a Standing Order or Resolution." That is the first objection which I anticipate. The second may come from those of your Lordships who will say—"We quite admit that you can do this by a Standing Order, but we think what you are proposing is only a quack remedy." If I can answer the first of those objections which I am anticipating, I think I shall establish the "possibleness" of my proposal. If, on the other hand, I can answer the second, I think I shall have established its usefulness and reasonableness. If I can answer both, whatever may be the measure of your Lordships' approval, I shall have justified myself, perhaps, in the view of the House for bringing this proposal before it. For I can assure your Lordships that I feel very strongly that to bring forward a measure of this sort in your House in at all a frivolous spirit would be a most extraordinary proceeding. Now, my Lords, I approach the first part of this subject, which I will call the Constitutional difficulty, with considerable diffidence. The ability to deal with a question of that kind depends so much upon absolute clearness, and that again depends so much upon habit, that people who have not that clearness and habit must feel considerable diffidence. On a celebrated occasion, Lord Lyndhurst in this House recited, I believe from memory, every black-letter authority, on a very important proposal which was brought before the House. It was an extraordinary effort of memory, rendered necessary, I believe, by the fact that his eyes would not permit him to read his notes. It appears, however, that on that occasion Lord Lyndhurst got his way not by the weight of his black-letter authorities, but by the weight of his own personal authority and the vivid impression which he created in the House. I can hope for no succour either from personal authority or from vivid impression; but perhaps I may advance this plea that I at once reassure your Lordships I shall quote no black-letter authorities upon the subject. Now, my Lords, I will proceed to handle the Constitutional difficulty which might be raised in this matter, that is that my proposal cannot be carried out by a Standing Order. Assuming an unanimous approval—which cannot obviously be assumed in regard to a measure of this sort—I believe that such a proposal as this could be carried out without any Standing Order. I believe it could be carried out by what is called a Constitutional understanding. Of course, your Lordships are aware that as Peers we all have the undoubted and absolute right to sit upon your Lordships' Court of Appeal; but by a Constitutional understanding it is an understood thing that no lay Lord does sit upon that Court of Appeal, and that the lay Lords have entirely given over the exercise of their judicial functions to the Law Lords. Well, I think, on that analogy, the same thing could be done here. I believe that this proposal could be carried out by a Constitutional understanding. But, my Lords, I think it would be far better done by a Standing Order, as was done in the case of proxies by the Standing Order to which I have just alluded. I have explained what was done then; and as that Standing Order can be vacated by giving two days' notice, although you might pass a Standing Order on the lines I have suggested you would not be committing yourselves to any absolutely irremediable error. There would be no great machinery necessary to set it in motion, and upon notice you could vacate that Standing Order. Of course, a Standing Order, as long as it is in force, is absolutely binding upon the Members of either House of Parliament, whichever House passes it, and either House of Parliament has absolute control over its Members with a view to making them obey that Standing Order. It has been suggested to me that such a Standing Order might bring us into an embarrassing law-suit, and that some stiff-necked Peer might dispute the authority of the Order and bring a law-suit against the officers of the House. It is quite true, of course, that a Peer might force himself past the Clerk, and having got rid of the Clerk, score out his own name with a chalk pencil; but I think that would be such a solitary instance, and the Peer who would adopt that courageous mode of making the correction he desired would be such an isolated individual, that that is not a contingency which we need keep very much before us. But I think Mr. Justice Stephen, in summing up in the case of "Bradlaugh *v.* Gosset," decided that where there is no legal remedy there is no legal wrong, and although a Peer might feel himself very much aggrieved by such Standing Order he could not get any remedy for it as he could against an infraction of the law. My Lords, I hope that will serve to show that as far as the Constitutional difficulty goes it can be met by a Standing Order. Now I come to the second objection, which I anticipate—that it may be urged against me that what I have to propose is only a quack remedy. I dissent from that altogether. I think that the affirmation of any such proposal and putting it into force would be a distinct advance in the Constitutional morality of your Lordships' House. In that we are accountable to no constituents we incur, I think, very much graver responsibilities, and that we should on that account devise every possible safeguard against in any way overdoing or abuse the exercise of the powers entrusted to us. But, my Lords, it may be said that this plea is altogether too theoretic, and that I ought to find some plea which is not so abstract or theoretic. I believe that the House would become more useful if in this way it became more seemly, and that increased usefulness would be the result of increased seemliness. A very keen critic, Mr. Bagehot, whose work on the subject Professor Dicey still considers incomparable, speaks on this point so very much better than I can speak myself, that perhaps your Lordships will allow me to read his own words. Mr. Bagehot, in his work on the English Constitution in the chapter on the House of Lords, says—

> "As far as politics go there is profound truth in Lord Chesterfield's axiom, that the world must judge of you by what you seem, not by what you are. The world" (says Mr. Bagehot) "knows what you seems, it does not know what you are. An assembly, a revising

assembly especially, which does not assemble, which looks as if it does not care how it revises, is defective in a main political ingredient. It may be of use, but it will hardly convince mankind that it is so."

And in another place Mr. Bagehot says—

> "Some day or other the slack attendance in the House of Lords will destroy the House of Lords."

My Lords, instances could be multiplied of the usefulness and the self-help which may be begotten by appearances, and I think if the House should affirm a principle of this kind your Lordships would find more business to do, and I believe we should be altogether in a better position as a part of the body politic to bring about—I believe it would require an Act of Parliament—a state of things which would lead to Bills being carried on from one Session to another, and to make arrangements for a better and fairer distribution of business. I hope, my Lords, you may see the temporal discretion of getting as much as we possibly can into touch with the times we live in, and of adapting our own ideas to the altered condition of political society. We live in days of legislation—as we recently heard in your Lordships' House—in days which many people consider days of over-legislation. That means that occasions may arise much more frequently or rapidly than they have hitherto done where the two Houses of Parliament will differ—not come into actual collision, because I think the fears of actual collision between the two Houses are much exaggerated, and that those occasions are much more rare than people who go about agitating would have their audiences believe; but differences of opinion must arise, and I think it would be well if we could do away with the old reproach that the decisions of the House of Commons are reversed or are liable to be reversed and rejected by a majority of Peers, who at no other time give any sign of political life or political responsibility. We shall thus get rid of an old reproach, and by getting rid of it give an answer to the only arguable objection to the House of Lords. My Lords, what we should remember now, is that we are the revising assembly of a democracy, we are the revising assembly of a House of Commons which is every day becoming more important, because it is becoming more representative. I think, my Lords, in justice to your opinions, if they are open to the objection that those opinions are carried by a majority which at no other time shows any sign of political responsibility or political life, that objection should be removed. That I hold is an objection which, although it may not be fatal, goes a long way to obscure and outweigh the justice and value of the opinions which your Lordships arrive at. Well, my Lords, so much for the question of quack remedy. There is one more advantage which I claim for my proposal, which is that it provides a convenient and automatic channel for disposing of that more or less historical personage the "black sheep." It also provides a similar convenient and automatic channel for some Peers who do not care about attending to politics. They would be freed from, in some respects, a false position. After all, it is not an absolute certainty that because a Peer has succeeded to a seat in the House of Lords, he has succeeded to an inclination for politics, and it may reasonably be supposed that he finds other directions for the exercise of his talents or inclinations which are more congenial to him. Those Peers will disappear without any beat of drum, and, as far as the black sheep are concerned, without any invidious finger of scorn being pointed at them. That is all I have to say upon that point. My Lords, I am well aware that this House rests upon ancient deference, custom, and tradition. As a lover of the House, I should be the very last person to wish to say anything which would in any way impair that ancient tradition or that ancient deference, but I have yet to learn that either an institution or an individual impairs the respect which is due to him by converting his rights into responsibilities or by giving, as it were, hostages to his privileges. I thank you, my Lords, for having listened so kindly to what I had to say. I hope your Lordships will give the proposal I have tried to outline to you, your full consideration, and I hope you will be advised in this matter, not by me, but by a very wise man who said that "In the long run the retention of a froward custom was more likely to lead to difficulties than positive innovations.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK): My Lords, in the absence of my noble Friend, who has been unexpectedly called away, I may, perhaps, be allowed to intrude myself upon the House upon this occasion. I have no wish, as I am sure your Lordships will understand, to treat that which has been brought forward so feelingly and seriously in any other way than seriously, but, at the same time, I do not think it satisfactory that we should be called upon to discuss that which is not before us in any material shape or in a shape in which we can form a deliberate opinion as to its working. The proposal thrown out is simply that there should be in this House a species of self-selection—a plan by which people who selected themselves in one Session should be the acting people in the next. Though it is, doubtless, most desirable to my mind that we should have meritorious persons taking their part in the proceedings of the House of Lords, it seems hardly the best way for securing this object that Peers should be allowed to select themselves. Mere attendance in this House does not give one any special idea of the qualifications of those who may so attend. Nor is it possible, I think, to carry into effect the proposal of my noble Friend, which, as I understand it, is that if a Peer had not attended a certain number of times, say in the last Session of 1889, he would have been disqualified, and is to be deprived of the right to vote in the present Session of 1890; but though he is not to be allowed to vote, the House, apparently, is still to have the advantage of his eloquence. The great objection to the proposal is that it involves an interference with the summons which the Queen sends to those who sit in this House. A Peer has received the Queen's summons to come here and perform that duty which it has been so emphatically announced to-day is incumbent upon him, of advising upon the dangers and conditions of the State. I should like to know whether, when he is cut off from his Vote, he is to be cut off from speech, and whether we are to lose the benefit of that wisdom which he may possess though he may not have been in attendance during the preceding Session. His right of speech, I understand from the noble Lord, would remain to him, but he would be really considered as in fact qualifying himself in the course of the Session going on for voting in the Session to come afterwards. Therefore, I suppose he would be coming here and you would not put a prohibition upon the use of his tongue, though you might the use of his Vote. But it certainly would, as far as I understand it, be an interference with the Queen's summons to the Peers, calling upon them to advise in this House upon the affairs of the State. My noble Friend seems to be under a misapprehension as to the attendances in this House. No doubt, except on one or two occasions this Session, there has not been a large attendance; but, as a matter of fact, everybody who is a Peer, with the exception of about 150, including several Members who are filling high offices abroad, have attended—that is to say, there has been an attendance at different periods during the Session of more than 400 Members of your Lordships' House. What, then, would be the case if this Resolution of my noble Friend were carried? Why should we wish that all Peers should be in attendance here when there is no business? I see from the Journals there was, for instsnce, one occasion when the attendance fell very low, but if you look at what the business was that was put down for that night you will see at once that it would be absurd to ask the attendance of a great number of your Lordships for the purpose of disposing of business when no business was on the Paper to be done. With regard to the right of sitting in your Lordships' Court of Appeal, there is no doubt in your Lordships' hands, if you wish to exercise it, the power of sitting upon the legal questions which come before the House, and if you were present and attended to all the evidence and arguments brought forward you would have a right to vote. But as a matter of practice that right has been given up long ago. A change has been made in recent years by which it is required that there shall be a quorum of Law Lords. By the Act which was passed in that matter the House resumed its power which at one time was threatened to be taken away. My noble Friend seems to think that this proposal would be a remedy for something which I cannot make out to exist. What is it that is to justify the disqualification here? Is it the slack attendance that my noble Friend complains of? There has been always present a number of Members amply sufficient to do the business before the House this Session, and if my noble Friend had attended upon the Committees he would have seen that there has been not only a large attendance upon those Committees, but that there was a degree of care and anxious watching over the different measures brought forward which would show that this House was exercising that power of revising legislation which he seems to think so especially belongs to it. The noble Lord rather takes away from us any desire to execute him with his own guillotine, to follow his own analogy, but I cannot help observing that, from a Return which I have had put into my hands, my noble Friend has only attended eight times out of the 57 occasions on which the House has sat this Session, and I do not think it is a very advantageous thing that this House should be governed by theory instead of by practice. The noble Lord has not afforded us the advantage of the practice of his theory, either in the House or on the Committees of the House, for I have received the terrible information that in his great desire that this House should exercise its revising powers upon the matters which come before it he has not himself exercised his revising powers once during the last four years. My Lords, I value theories very much, but, at the same time, I do not think that those of us who have been in constant attendance in the House should be taught by those who have not attended, or that we should be corrected by those who would themselves seem to deserve the correction which they would apply to us. I agree with the noble Lord in saying that any reform of the House should come from within. I do not think it would be very advisable that we should be brought into strong collision with those who would wish to reform us from without. But I think I may say this, that the House has been endeavouring to, even if it has not succeeded, bring about a state of things by which the legislation passing through the House should be carefully examined. I know that some of your Lordships differ as to the value of those Committees which sit weekly for several hours on each occasion for the purpose of carefully examining the legislation which comes before them, but I feel certain that if those Committees did not exist the House would in full assembly make it its duty to go carefully through those measures which might be brought before the House. There are always in the House, we may feel sure, those who would take care that that was done. I may mention one noble Lord who sits opposite, Lord Herschell, whom I do not see there at the present moment, who would take care that that duty was performed. I am sure there is no one in this House who is not convinced that any legislation which might be brought before the House would receive attention and care from the noble Lord, and that, if necessary, your Lordships would have an opportunity of carefully revising it. My Lords, I have had a very short experience of this House, and I should not have thought of addressing you upon this occasion had it not been for the sudden absence of my noble Friend; but I would venture to express the hope that your Lordships will not go into the theoretical experiments which are, I believe, quite contrary to the terms upon which your Lordships sit in this House. I do not think it is advisable in any way to deter Peers from coming to this House. Supposing you were to inform indirectly in that way all those who had not attended last Session, by way of inviting them to attend more regularly, that they should not have speech or vote—or if speech no vote—during next Session, of course they would not come. No man would come to the House if he were bound by such a Standing Order as that. In my opinion such a Standing Order would be wholly illegal. It would be contrary to the terms on which your Lordships are summoned to this House. You are bound to give your advice and votes while you are here, and if you desire to do anything of this kind it must be done by legislation and not by a Standing Order. It would be a most unreasonable thing that any Member of this House, who has been absent a good deal during one Session, should have to explain to your Lordships the reason why he was absent, the mission upon which he was engaged, and whether or not the reasons which he might be able to give were sufficient to bring him within the exemptions mentioned by the noble Lord. That is not the way in which I think your Lordships can arrive at a wise conclusion upon this subject. There are those who think that great reforms are needed in this House. I confess I am not one of them; but much may be done, and one way in which the value of your Lordships' House may be maintained will be by a steady perseverance in the work in which we are now engaged—that is, in looking most carefully into those legislative measures which are committed to your care.

*EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I am sometimes accused of not being so extreme a reformer of the House of Lords as I ought to be, but I think the noble Lord the Lord President of the Council has been a little too hard in dealing with my noble Friend. I think that everyone who heard him must have been struck not only with the substance of his speech but with the extreme moderation of his tone in bringing the matter before your Lordships' attention. I think it is part of the merit of the noble Lord that he did not directly propose the change to which the noble Viscount objects, but he merely stated that his wish was to ascertain how far it would be in accordance with the feelings of the House, not to adopt this particular measure, but to go so far as to appoint a Committee by which the matter might be considered in all its bearings. Now, I agree with a great deal that the noble Viscount has said. I agree that there is practically a better attendance in this House than there is popularly supposed to be; and I entirely agree with what, perhaps, is not so well known to the public as it ought to be, the immense advantage which has already accrued to the legislation passed from this House by the work done by the very numerous body of Peers in the Standing Committees lately appointed. But the noble Viscount seems to think there is no grievance at all. I think a grievance is felt. Whether you can remedy that grievance in this way or in any other way I do not at present undertake to state; but I do most distinctly state that it is thought a very objectionable thing by the public with regard to the proceedings of this House, that whereas our normal numbers are few and generally composed of pretty nearly the same class of Peers, perhaps, once or twice during the Session, when there is a measure of very great importance to be considered, Peers who have not shown the slightest aptitude, or the slightest liking for any political subject come down to the House, and, by merely giving their votes, convey very often a very erroneous view of the opinions of the House of Lords. I entirely agree with both the noble speakers that any reform had better come from within, but I disagree with the noble Viscount that for such a reform as this a Bill would be required. I think there are great objections to a Bill, not fatal objections at all, but I think it would be unwise of the House of Lords to volunteer to lay themselves, as it were, on the dissecting table of the House of Commons, excepting on the ground that a very large and important measure justified it. And besides that, such a Bill, if it were possible, should come backed up by the full authority of its being a Government measure, brought in by a Government who naturally command a majority in the other House. But I do not think this matter, which is one entirely concerning our own procedure, is one which requires a Bill. If, indeed, it affected any right of the Crown, or of the House of Commons, that would be a very different thing, and there, I think, the necessity for a Bill would arise, but with regard to a mere question of procedure, I am quite sure you have the power of dealing with it yourselves if you think it is advisable so to do. Certainly, after the very decided opinion that the noble Viscount has given on the part of Her Majesty's Government, I can hardly, unless some unexpected support come to my noble Friend from other quarters, suppose that he will wish to insist upon the matter being referred to a Committee, but I should be glad if some of the non-official Members of the House would, on a subject of this sort, for it is obviously not at all of a Party character, express their opinions as to what they think, for the sake of the House, would be desirable to do.

*THE EARL OF SELBORNE: My Lords, I agree with my noble Friend who has just spoken with regard to the tone and spirit in which this proposal has been introduced by the noble Lord near me. I certainly should not be inclined myself in a summary way to reject the principle of the proposal; but I am bound to say that I do feel a difficulty in looking upon this as a question merely of procedure of the House. The proposition is in substance, under certain circumstances, to exclude Members of the House who have a right to be present in it from the power of voting in its proceedings, not for any fault they may have committed which might justify suspension or anything more, but simply for non-attendance in the previous year. I will not say, if precedents could be found by any Committee which might be appointed, that the Committee might not come to a conclusion that this might be treated as a matter of procedure, but at present I own I feel a great deal of difficulty about it. If we look to the other House no one would suppose it would be constitutional for the House of Commons, by a general Resolution or Standing Order, to exclude from voting some of its Members, unless upon grounds of necessity for the maintenance of its order or the regularity of its proceedings. While, therefore, I do not at all say that if a Motion were made for the appointment of a Committee upon this subject I should oppose it, I am bound to say that my present impression is, in such a case as this it would be going beyond the powers which the House has to regulate its own business to carry out such a proposal.

CONSOLIDATION OF STATUTES.

QUESTION—OBSERVATIONS.

*EARL STANHOPE, in rising to ask the Lord Chancellor whether any scheme could be recommended to Parliament by which the consolidation of Statutes could be more easily effected, either by the Statute Law Committee or by some other body, said: My Lords, before asking the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack the question which stands in my name, I hope I may be permitted to say a word or two in explanation of the object of the question. I have, for a considerable period, noticed that Consolidation Bills are, from time to time, brought before both Houses of Parliament, and it is obviously quite impossible for the general body of Members of either House to consider a matter of so technical a nature as the consolidation of one Statute with another. There exists, as your Lordships are well aware, a Statute Law Revision Committee, which revises all the Statutes from time to time, and a great number of the old Statutes have already been so revised; but, as regards the consolidation of Statutes, it is such a purely technical matter to consolidate Statutes as requiring special legal knowledge that I should be very glad to see some body, either the Statute Law Revision Committee or some other body, which could be made answerable for the work of consolidating the Statutes appointed to perform that work before the Bills come before the consideration of either House. My Lords, it is within my recollection that in 1875 there was a very long Bill which was considered in another place—that was the Public Health Act of 1875. In that Statute there were 343 clauses. I was in the House when that Bill was going through, and I am sure it was quite impossible for any Member to form an opinion upon numerous clauses without having all the previous Acts before him. Then there has been another Bill of the kind passing through your Lordships' House, the Lunacy Acts Consolidation Bill. That Bill also has about 350 clauses. My object in asking this question is to elicit from my noble and learned Friend some expression of opinion as to whether it would be possible or not to have some body to consolidate these very long Statutes. The Parliamentary machine is already somewhat out of gear; and when your Lordships observe the number of questions which are asked not merely upon notice in another place, but the hundreds of other questions which are asked without any notice at all, to us outsiders not understanding the technical part of Bill-drafting it seems a matter of ordinary common-sense that these matters should be delegated to some body other than the Houses of Parliament. I do not mean that Consolidation Bills should be withdrawn from passing through all their stages; all I mean is that it is impossible for either House of Parliament to consider them in Committee, and it is for that reason that I venture to ask the noble and learned Lord the question which stands in my name.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, I am sorry to say that I am unable to suggest any improvement of the existing system under which the consolidation and revision of the Statute Law proceeds, except to recommend Parliament (in another place) to allow the Bill presented for that purpose to pass as rapidly as possible. It is not necessary for me to repeat, what I have frequently asserted, my acknowledgment of the accuracy combined with speed which has characterised the work of the Statute Law Committee since I have had occasion to deal with it. I have been glad to learn that the Select Committee of the House of Commons which has recently examined the Statute Law Revision Bill confirms my opinion. But I am sorry to say a very serious check has for the present apparently paralysed the work, just when it was making most satisfactory progress. The Statute Law Bill was blocked at the end of last Session; and, notwithstanding every effort which has been made, the prospects of completing the new cheap edition of the Revised Statutes on which we are engaged seems further from realisation than it was 12 months ago. I trust, however, that this unfortunate delay is only a temporary obstacle to a most useful work.

House adjourned at twenty minutes
past Five o'clock till to-morrow
a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 23rd June, 1890.

MAHARAJAH OF REWAH (PETITION).

Ordered, That the Petition of the Princes and subjects of the Maharajah of Rewah, presented 10th June, be printed and circulated with the Votes.—(*Mr. Bradlaugh.*)

BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND).

Return ordered, "Of the Proceedings in the Bankruptcy Court, Dublin, as under:—

	Filed in 1878.	Filed in 1888.	Filed in 1889.
Petitions for Arrangement.. ..			
Petitions of Bankruptcy			
Total			

	In 1878.	In 1883.	In 1888.
Number of Cases in the Court List or "Legal Diary" for both Judges			
Number of days each Judge sat			

—(*Mr. Peter M'Donald.*)

QUESTIONS.

SALT TAX IN ORISSA.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Government of India would grant a Commission to inquire into the whole question of the Salt Tax in Orissa, and the effects resulting from the administration of the tax being placed under the Madras Authorities; and whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a Report from the Bengal officials concerning the present manner of levying the tax and its result on the population?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): No, Sir. In the opinion of the Secretary of State it is not necessary at present to appoint a Commission. A special Report has been called for respecting salt affairs in the district of Orissa.

THE REGISTRAR GENERAL'S RETURNS.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the fact that, according to the last Report of the Registrar General, in addition to 25,132 cases in which the cause of death was "ill defined or not specified" in medical certificates of death, 15,747 deaths occurred in England and Wales, in 1888, in which the cause of death was not certified either by a medical man or coroner; and whether, taking that fact into consideration, Government will consent to the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the sufficiency of the existing law as to the disposal of the dead, for securing an accurate record of the causes of death in all cases, and specially for detecting them where death may have been due to poison, violence, or criminal neglect?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): There were 25,132 deaths in 1888 in which the cause of death was "ill-defined or not specified," and 15,747 deaths in which the cause was not certified by either a medical man or coroner; but it is not the fact that the 25,132 deaths were all of them cases in which there was a medical certificate, or that they were in addition to the deaths in which there was no certificate forthcoming. The great bulk of the 15,747 uncertified deaths are, I am informed by the Registrar General, included in the 25,132 deaths in which the cause was either not specified or not sufficiently defined for due classification. As regards the 15,747 deaths without medical or coroner's certificate, it must not be assumed that these were all cases in which there was no medical attendance. Many of them were, doubtless, cases which had been attended by unregistered medical practitioners, who cannot give legally recognisable certificates. The proportion both of deaths in which the cause is ill-defined or not specified and of uncertified deaths has been gradually diminishing. Thus, in the years 1881-1887 the proportion of the ill-defined deaths averaged 5·7 per cent. of all deaths registered, but in 1888 it was only 4·9 per cent. As regards uncertified deaths, the proportion in 1879 was 4·7 per cent., and this fell gradually, until, in 1888, it was 3·1 per cent. As I stated in reply to a previous question of the hon. Member's, the Registrar General has good reason to know that a very large proportion of the cases of uncertified deaths are reported by Registrars to Coroners prior to their registration, although those officers, in the exercise of their discretion, decide that it is unnecessary to hold inquests. It is too late to entertain the question of the appointment of a Select Committee this Session, but I will promise the hon. Member that the question of the expediency of such a Committee shall be carefully considered during the recess.

TREATIES OF COMMERCE.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if a representative of the trading interests of Canada, Australasia, South Africa, and India, will be appointed to the Committee now in process of formation, to consider the Treaties of Commerce which are about to expire?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): No, Sir. It is proposed to confine this Committee to representatives of the commercial interests in the United Kingdom.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT: Then in what way is the colonial interest to be considered?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The commercial policy of our self-governing colonies, with one great exception, is altogether different from our own.

BETTING PROSECUTIONS.

MR. S. SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the action of the Recorder of Liverpool in some prosecutions of betting clubs which have recently been before him, in which the defendants succeeded in getting off; whether his attention has been drawn to the case of the "Waterloo Club," and to the evidence that it was a betting club, and to the summing up of the Recorder in this case, in which he is reported to have said that—

> "The Legislature had never taken a decisive course in regard to betting. Betting under the Act of Parliament had a special meaning, namely, that one person paid or received what was wagered by others. It would not be against the Act if two members of the club made a bet, and the one paid the other."

The defendants were found not guilty on the charges of "keeping," "using," "permitting," and "assisting;" whether his attention has been drawn to the case of the "Tarleton Club," in which the defendants had been fined by one of the City Justices for keeping the club open for betting purposes, which conviction was quashed by the Recorder of Liverpool upon an exception taken by the counsel for the defendants to the convictions, on the ground that they proceeded against the defendants as owners or occupiers of the premises, whereas, though they were shareholders, the premises were rated as occupied by the Tarleton Club Company, Limited; and whether he is prepared to recommend legislation to remedy these defects in the law, as evidenced by the above cases?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the learned Recorder that the report of what he said in the case of the Waterloo Club is not accurate. What he did say was that the Legislature had never prohibited betting, or made it unlawful, but had only made bets irrecoverable by law. He also said that the statute 16 and 17 Vict., cap. 119, under which the defendants were indicted, had been held to apply to places where money was received in advance on one side, and not to betting generally. Unless this club could be proved to be such a place the defendants were entitled to their acquittal. With regard to the Tarleton Club, the defendants had been convicted as "owners" and "occupiers." There was no evidence that this was the case, as the counsel for the Justices admitted. The above cases do not, therefore, disclose any serious defect in the law; and I can hold out no hope of legislation on this subject at any early date.

SWAZILAND.

MR STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give to the House any information in respect to the negotiations now proceeding for the settlement of Swaziland?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): I regret that the negotiations have not reached a stage at which it would be possible to give the House any information except that Her Majesty's Government are at present waiting for a reply from the Government of the South African Republic to the latest communications of Sir H. Loch.

MR. S. LEIGHTON: Can the right hon. Gentleman inform the House what the purport of the instructions sent to the High Commissioner is?

BARON H. DE WORMS: It is impossible for me to give the House that information.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): Can the right hon. Gentleman say when the Government will be in a position to furnish the desired information?

BARON H. DE WORMS: The length of time that must elapse will depend on the time it would take to get the answers from the South African Republic.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMPANY.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can inform the House what is the estimated extent in square miles of the territory placed by Royal Charter under the control of the South African Company, and the estimated population of the native tribes inhabiting it; whether Mr. Cecil Rhodes, the Chairman of the Company, is under an obligation to report to the High Commissioner of South Africa, or is independent of him; and whether he can say what is the number of soldiers or police in the employ of the company, and what is the name of the officer in command of them, and from whom he receives his commission?

BARON H. DE WORMS: No territory is placed under the control of the British South African Company by the Royal Charter. The effect of that Charter is to enable the company to exercise as a corporation any concessions and any powers of control granted by local rulers. Mr. Rhodes is not chairman of the company. As one of the officers of the company (managing director in South Africa), he is bound under Section 18 of the Charter to communicate freely with the High Commissioner, and to pay due regard to any requirements, suggestions, or requests which the High Commissioner may make to him. The number of police in the company's employment is believed to be 500. There is also a body of 150 miners and settlers, called pioneers. The officer temporarily in command of the police is Colonel Pennefather. He, of course, receives from the company any commission which he may hold for the purpose of his police command.

MR. S. LEIGHTON: Is he obliged to report to the High Commissioner?

BARON H. DE WORMS: Any action the Company may take they are bound to report to the High Commissioner.

CYPRUS.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any step has been taken to meet the wishes expressed to Her Majesty's Government by the deputation from Cyprus last year, either in the way of reforms in the civil administration or of relief from taxation; and, if so, whether he will state what changes have been introduced?

BARON H. DE WORMS: The views of Her Majesty's Government on the representations of the deputation from Cyprus will be found in the Parliamentary Paper C, 6,003, recently distributed, especially in the Secretary of State's Despatch of the 22nd of March, 1890, at p. 23. Various reductions of expenditure have been made, and some other reforms will be initiated, as described in the papers referred to; but it would be impossible to state the particulars within the limits of an answer.

MR. S. LEIGHTON: I beg to give notice that I will call attention to the question on the Estimates.

LUNACY.

MR. W. CORBET (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy for the year 1889 will be laid upon the Table?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Commissioners that this Report is now with the printers, and they hope to be able to lay it on the Table of the House at the end of the week.

MR. W. CORBET: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when the Report of the Inspectors of Lunatics for the year 1889 will be laid upon the Table?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Inspectors of Lunatic Asylums hope to be in a position to lay the Report in question upon the Table of the House during next month.

NEW DOCK AT GIBRALTAR.

SIR J. SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he will undertake, with reference to the proposed construction of a graving dock at Gibraltar, to follow the precedent set in the case of the Somerset Dock at Malta, and submit to Parliament all designs and papers referring thereto before entering into any contract or arrangement for its construction?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The design and details of the Somerset Dock at Malta were not submitted to Parliament, but certain correspondence and plans showing the position of the new dock were presented to Parliament after the work had been taken in hand. The responsibility for the selection of a suitable site and plan of the proposed dock at Gibraltar must rest with the Government, and the Board of Admiralty are fully prepared to accept that responsibility.

CARDIFF RIFLE VOLUNTEERS.

Mr. A. THOMAS (Glamorgan, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to a paragraph in the *Western Mail*, of the 19th instant, in which it is reported that great dissatisfaction exists among the Rifle Volunteers of Cardiff, in consequence of the amalgamation of the two detachments; whether, in consequence, only very few members attend parade; whether it was a well known fact that the amalgamation was very distasteful and would be resented; whether previous to the amalgamation both detachments were numerically strong and efficient; and whether he will cause an inquiry to be made, in order to make arrangements that will be satisfactory to members of both detachments?

*The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. E. Stanhope, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The amalgamation referred to was a regimental arrangement, which would have been carried out much earlier if it had not been for debts on the part of one of the detachments. It is reputed that since the amalgamation the attendance has improved, and that the strength is greater than before it took effect.

UPPER DIVISION CLERKS.

Mr. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Treasury Minute relating to the Upper Division Clerks will be laid upon the Table?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square): I regret that I must refer my hon. Friend to several previous answers I have given, explaining the reasons for the length of time which it takes to deal with this important question.

ENGLISH HOPS.

Mr. H. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the United States Government intend to increase the duties upon English hops by 25 per cent.?

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. Fergusson, Manchester, N.E.): According to a late edition of the Tariff Bill published in America, it appears that the duty on British hops is to be raised from 8c. to 15c. (4d. to 7½d.) per lb., or nearly doubled.

HOME OFFICE CONTRACTS.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether complaint has been made that the plastering, or a portion of it, at the new Metropolitan Police Office has been sub-let by the contractor to a piece-master named Charles Peak; whether complaint has been made that the sub-contractor is an unfair employer; whether his attention has been called to a report of a case tried at Bow Street on 10th June, when the said Charles Peak was summoned by four plasterers for money due to them, and condemned to pay the claim and all costs; and whether complaint has been made that the plastering is being done in an imperfect manner, and with adulterated or inferior material, so that the Clerk of the Works has been compelled to condemn some of the work?

Mr. MATTHEWS: Charles Peak was employed by the contractor to superintend the work of the plasterers at the new Police Offices. He was not a sub-contractor. He was paid a weekly wage, and he did not pay the men or supply the material. He engaged the men, and had the power of dismissing them. No complaint has been made to the Receiver of Police that Peak is an unfair employer. I have not seen a report of the case in question, but I am informed that it had nothing to do with Peak's employment at the Police Offices. Complaint has been made that some of the architraves and mouldings had not been done in accordance with the specifications. They have been condemned by the architect, and will be made good by the contractor. The further services of Charles Peak have been dispensed with.

THE GOVERNOR OF NEW SOUTH WALES.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies when does Lord

Carrington's term of office, as Governor of New South Wales, expire; has any successor been appointed to succeed him; and whether the Secretary of State for the Colonies has unofficially submitted the name of Lord Carrington's successor to the Prime Minister, Sir Henry Parkes; or is it his intention to do so?

BARON H. DE WORMS: Lord Carrington has expressed a wish to resign in November. No successor has yet been appointed. The Secretary of State's Despatch of the 8th July, 1889, presented to Parliament in the Paper C,5828, shows the views of Her Majesty's Government as to consulting the Colonial Governments before appointing Governors, and I have nothing to add.

ZANZIBAR.

DR. CAMERON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the statement contained in an interpellation to the French Government, of which, according to a *Reuter's* Despatch dated Paris, 19th June, M. Deloncle has given notice to the effect that in 1862 Lord Cowley, on behalf of Great Britain, and M. Thouvenel, on behalf of France, signed a declaration by which the two countries mutually agreed not to interfere with the independence of Zanzibar, and that Germany gave her adhesion to this declaration in 1862; and whether any such agreement as that alleged was entered into between France and this country; and, if so, was the consent of France to the abrogation of the agreement obtained before entering into the arrangement regarding Zanzibar, announced in Lord Salisbury's Despatch to Sir E. Malet of the 14th inst.?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The agreement in question was entered into, but Her Majesty's Government are not of opinion that it is interfered with by the assumption of a Protectorate of the dominions of the Sultan with his full consent.

*DR. CAMERON: Is it true, as stated in an Exchange telegram published this afternoon, that satisfactory communication has passed between the French and English Governments on the subject of the Protectorate of Zanzibar?

SIR J. FERGUSSON: No, Sir; that is not true. I can only say that information of the intention of England to assume this Protectorate has been conveyed to the French Government, but it had not reached the hands of the Minister when he made his speech on the matter to the French Assembly. Information has been conveyed, but no reply has yet been received.

MILITIA NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS.

MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War why non-commissioned officers of Militia Corps (on Army engagement), performing the duties of pay sergeants of companies during training, are not remunerated in the same manner as those performing similar duties in the Regular Forces?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The allowance given to the Regular Forces was granted when the captain's contingent allowance was modified. No change has been made for the present in the contingent allowance of the Militia captains; but should any be adopted, the subject raised by the hon. Member will not be lost sight of.

THE INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether in the case of entailed estates it is the practice of the Inland Revenue Department on the succession of each heir to charge any Probate, Succession, or other Death Duty in respect of heirlooms such as jewels, gold and silver plate, books, &c., often of great value; if so, upon what scale; and, if not, can he explain on what grounds?

MR. GOSCHEN: Heirlooms, such as jewels, plate, pictures, and books, are charged with Probate Duty as part of the personal estate of the deceased person who, by his will, directs them to be held as heirlooms; but they are not charged with any Legacy or Succession Duty so long as they are enjoyed in kind only by any person or persons not having any power of selling or disposing thereof, so as to convert the same into money or other property yielding an income; but when the heirlooms are actually sold or disposed of, or come to any person having power to sell or dispose thereof, or having an absolute interest therein, then Legacy or Succession Duty is exacted as upon any other legacy or succession.

Dr. KENNY (Cork, S.): Is it true that in regard to the Hamilton heirlooms no duty has been charged upon them, and will Succession Duty be not charged as the result of the sale of the so-called heirlooms?

Mr. GOSCHEN asked for notice of the question.

METROPOLITAN POST OFFICE COUNTERMEN.

Mr. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I had intended to ask the Postmaster General whether he has received a Petition from the countermen of the metropolitan postal districts, which was transmitted to him through the Postmaster of the West Central district on the 13th of last month, asking him to favour a Committee of their class with an interview; and whether, seeing that he recently granted a similar application to the telegraphists and sorters, he will accede to the request of the countermen? I will postpone the question until to-morrow.

IRELAND—CHARGES AGAINST THE POLICE.

Mr. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has seen the Report of the proceedings at the Rathmore (County Kerry) Petty Sessions on the 14th instant, from which it appears that a number of men were charged with having assaulted the police, and that two of the police assaulted (Constables O'Connor and Lett), who were at the time carrying rifles, admitted that they had been drinking previous to the occurrence; whether the two policemen, Burns and Cullinane, concerned in the disturbance at Timoleague, County Cork, on the 3rd of September last, in which Daniel Donohoe lost his life by a revolver shot fired by Constable Cullinane, also admitted that they had been drinking previous to the occurrence; whether his attention has been called to the increasing frequency of cases of this kind, pointing to the spread of drinking habits among the Irish police; and, whether the rule which formerly existed, prohibiting constables from drinking or visiting public houses while on duty, is still in force; and, if not, when and why it was abrogated?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The case referred to in the first paragraph is *sub judice*, having been adjourned to the 30th instant. With regard to the general allegation as to increase of drunkenness amongst the Royal Irish Constabulary, the Inspector General informs me that, having given special attention to this point, he is able to state that offences of this kind have, during recent years, very much declined. It is at present, and always has been, a strict rule of the Service that men should not enter a public house when on duty, unless the duty itself requires their presence.

THE CLANRICARDE TENANTRY.

Mr. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Timothy Clarke is at present undergoing a sentence of three months' imprisonment in consequence of his signing the Relieving Officer's book, in his capacity as Guardian in the Portumna Union, for outdoor relief given to Lord Clanricarde's evicted tenants, and for which he was surcharged by the Local Government Auditor, summoned before Petty Sessions Court, and ordered to be imprisoned for the above term; whether it is a fact that on a former occasion Mr. John Eyre, J.P., late Chairman of the same Board, signed the Relieving Officer's book for a sum four times the amount given by Mr. Clarke; whether Mr. Eyre, although surcharged by the Auditor in the amount signed for by him, and decreed at Petty Sessions for same, no attempt was made to levy the amount, and no punishment was inflicted upon him for his default; and if he will explain why such different treatment was accorded to these two Guardians?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that Mr. Clarke was proceeded against in the circumstances stated in the first paragraph, and that the Magistrate issued a warrant of distress for the amount, £47 10s., with the alternative penalty of three months' imprisonment. Upwards of two and a half years previously Mr. John Eyre was proceeded against for a surcharge of £40 10s., a decree obtained, and a warrant issued to levy the amount, which, however, proved unproductive. The failure in Mr. Eyre's case and some other cases about the same time arose from the fact that the proceedings were taken under the 28th section of the 10th Vict., chap. 31, which gives no power to the Magistrates to order imprisonment in the event of failure to distrain. To obviate the possibility of a recurrence of a miscarriage of this nature, the auditor has brought all cases since then under Sections 95 and 103 of the 1st & 2nd Vic., chap. 56, which gives the power of imprisonment in the event of the amount of the surcharge not being recovered.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Has the attention of the Lord Chancellor been called to the case of Mr. Eyre, who is a Magistrate and a man of substance?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: That question does not arise out of the question on the Paper. I was simply asked why two different modes of procedure were taken in two separate and distinct cases. I have pointed out that the proceedings in the first case were abortive.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Is it the fact that a Conservative Magistrate escaped scot-free, while a Nationalist got three months?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The procedure in Mr. Eyre's case was at the time the usual procedure.

BELFAST POST OFFICE.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I beg to defer until to-morrow a question of which I have given notice, to ask the Postmaster General whether seven members of the first class of clerks in the Telegraph Department of the Belfast Post Office hold the additional appointment of provincial clerks in charge; whether five of these had this appointment bestowed upon them in recognition of long service, and in consequence of their having been, at the time at which it was conferred, superseded in promotion to the first class; if so, upon what grounds were they permitted to retain this appointment, subsequently, on receiving promotion to the first class; whether the discharge of the duties incident to that of provincial clerks in charge obliges the holders of the position to be absent for long periods from Belfast; and, if so, have their duties during their absence to be discharged by members of the second class without any extra remuneration, and does their absence also cause present members of the first class, who are not provincial clerks in charge, to be more frequently employed upon night duty; and, if this be so, whether he will constitute the present holders of the position of provincial clerks in charge supernumeraries upon the staff of the Belfast office, and promote an equivalent number of the second class to be members of the first class, so that members of this class shall not be called upon to undertake responsible first class duties without the emoluments appertaining to the position?

THE LONDON COMPANIES IRISH ESTATES.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what are the amounts still held by the Purchase Commissioners for "the Fifth" Guarantees retained by them in the case of the sales of the London Companies' estates in Derry; and can any hope be held out that the Government will introduce Amendments in the Purchase Bill to prevent these amounts being paid over to the companies until the question of the liability of these bodies to the trusts for religion and education in Ireland, imposed by their charters, has been settled?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners report that the guarantee deposits held by them to the credit of the London Companies in respect of sales on their estates are as follows:—Drapers' Company, £19,156; Salters' Company, £46,418; Skinners' Company, £26,884; Fishmongers' Company, (including £237 lodged by the purchasers), £24,174. I hardly think an Amendment in the Purchase of Land Bill of the nature suggested by the hon. and learned Member is necessary, inasmuch as under the Ashbourne Act the question of paying over these guarantee deposits will not arise for some 20 years after the date of purchase.

POLICE "SHADOWING."

Mr. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a report in the *Freeman's Journal* of the 11th instant, in which it is alleged that the Rev. Fathers O'Doherty, Callan, and Shiel, of Carrickmacross and Donaghmoyne, in the County of Monaghan, were shadowed by four police constables on several Sundays and holydays, recently, while attending the chapels of Corcreagh, Corduff, and Donaghmoyne, for the purpose of celebrating Mass and discharging the other functions of their sacred office; that Fathers Callan and O'Dwyer were on several occasions shadowed by police to the houses of persons whom they were called to attend to in serious illness; whether this report is correct; and, if so, has he any objection to state the grounds and the authority upon which this police shadowing is carried on; and will he order it to be discontinued?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that it is the case that the rev. gentlemen referred to have been watched by the police in so far as it was necessary to prevent them from holding meetings of the National League, which has been suppressed in that district as an unlawful association, in consequence of the boycotting and intimidation practised by it there. Two of these rev. gentlemen openly in chapel advised their congregations to defy the law in this respect, one of them asking for subscriptions for the purpose, and directing his hearers, if the policemen asked them any questions, to tell them a bundle of lies; that to do so was no sin—not even a venial one. On one occasion when the police were following Mr. O'Doherty he entered a house where a sick person was. The police at once passed on for about a distance of a quarter of a mile, where they remained. The police observation of these rev. gentlemen will, of course, cease immediately upon their ceasing from their attempts to defy the law.

Mr. P. O'BRIEN: Will the right hon. Gentleman name any day in last month when these gentlemen attended an illegal meeting. Is it not the fact that they were watched in consequence of the boycotting of a railway company, and seeing that they have triumphed, as the people always will, is there any reason for watching them now?

[No answer was given.]

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the number of persons "shadowed" in Ireland, and the number "watched" by the police, and the number of policemen engaged in these operations? I have also to ask the right hon. Gentleman if it would be possible to grant a Return, giving the names and addresses of the persons "shadowed" or "watched" by the police in Ireland, and the causes therefor, for each year since 1884; and, if not, can he give the numbers respectively in each year?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that it would be impossible to state accurately the number of persons watched by the police from time to time, and the number of the latter who discharge this along with their other duties, as the necessity varies from day to day. It would be impracticable, but even if practicable inexpedient in the public interest, to give a nominal Return of the nature indicated in the second question. But I am informed that, speaking generally, the present number of suspects in Ireland is believed to be very inconsiderable, as compared with the earlier years under the administration of the right hon. Gentleman opposite.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman state who or what the suspects were. But the point of my question was, How many persons are now shadowed in Ireland?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think I have answered the question of the hon. Member.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I suppose I could not have made my point clear. I want a distinct answer as to the number of persons now shadowed in Ireland.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have told the hon. and learned Gentleman that it is impossible for me to give the information asked for.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Does the inability of the right hon. Gentleman to provide the information arise out of his reluctance to give it, or from the number being so large that it is beyond computation?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, it is not beyond the powers of computation. It arises largely from the fact that the necessities vary from day to day.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Can the right hon. Gentleman give the House the number shadowed on any particular day?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I will consider that question, but I am afraid that no accurate inference could be drawn from it.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Then to-morrow I will ask the right hon. Gentleman to give the number for a week.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary whether it is true that Mr. James O'Brien, of Killeagh, was arrested at Youghal Fair, last Monday, by a common policeman in plain clothes, who was occupied in closely "shadowing" Mr. O'Brien; and if he can explain why Mr. Redmond, R.M., was specially telegraphed for to investigate the charge of this gentleman accused of obstructing his "shadow"? I would further ask whether it is a fact that Mr. O'Brien was kept in a black hole, in a filthy unsanitary condition, for several hours, during which the Prison Authorities treated him with the utmost cruelty?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; I should think the matter alleged in the further question is not a fact. The Constabulary Authorities report that O'Brien was arrested by a constable in uniform on a charge of wilfully obstructing a constable on detective duty in plain clothes. The charge being brought under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act the attendance of a Resident Magistrate was necessary.

Dr. TANNER: Was the constable who arrested Mr. O'Brien "shadowing" him in an offensive way, and is it the fact that the only charge laid against Mr. O'Brien was that he followed the constable in question?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I know nothing about the second part of the question. With regard to the first part the policeman who followed Mr. O'Brien was in uniform.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): Is it the fact that when Mr. O'Brien was brought before a Magistrate he asked to see a solicitor and a friend, and that both requests were denied, as also was an offer which he made to find bail in £1,000 to answer any charge that might be made against him? Further, is it the fact that Mr. O'Brien was insulted by the policeman and beaten, that when taken to prison he was stripped naked, and that his clothes, which were taken from him under the plea that it was necessary to search him, were not returned to him for 24 hours?

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Why was Mr. O'Brien arrested at all instead of being summoned in the ordinary way?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I must ask for notice of these questions.

Dr. TANNER: I will put a question on the Paper to-morrow about the scandalous and blackguardly behaviour——

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member must observe Parliamentary propriety in his questions.

Dr. KENNY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that last year, when the two hon. Members for Clare (Mr. Cox and Mr. Jordan) attended at Ennis in response to a summons sent to them by the Registrar of the Clare Infirmary, of which institution they are Governors, to take part in the election of a physician to the infirmary, they were shadowed by the police during their entire stay in Ennis, and that during the entire time the election above mentioned was proceeding a police guard was stationed in the immediate vicinity of the infirmary, and whether he can state by whose direction the police acted in the manner above described?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that the hon. Members in question were watched by a policeman, who had a reason to suppose that they were going to hold an illegal meeting. No police guard was stationed at or near the infirmary.

Mr. SEXTON: Was there any "shadowing" by the police at the last fair at Dungarvan, County Waterford, as there had been at every previous fair in the same place for some time past, and have any instructions to restrain or restrict the practice of "shadowing" been lately issued on the part of the Government to any officials in Ireland?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The authorities report that the police had instructions to watch for any boycotting, but no boycotting was attempted. No instructions have lately been issued to restrain or restrict the practice called "shadowing."

LICENCES.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the unanimous judgment of the Court of Queen's

Bench in Ireland, of the 17th instant, upholding a decision of the Justices at Lurgan Quarter Sessions on 28th May, refusing to grant a transfer to Patrick Blayney of a licence for the house, 49, Church Street, Lurgan, held by his brother, the late James Blayney, on the ground of the "unfitness of the applicant" and "the unsuitability of the premises"; has he observed that it was proved in the case as follows: that the house in question was licensed for 70 years, and no objections had been made against the persons who held the licence during that time; that Patrick Blayney died in March, leaving the house to James Blayney, who got a protection order enabling him to carry on the business until the Quarter Sessions; that on the case coming before the Quarter Sessions, six Magistrates voted against the transfer, and five in favour of it; that the County Court Judge (Judge Kisbey) made it a rule not to vote on these cases, but intimated that if he did vote he would have voted in favour of the transfer; that the police made no objection to the transfer, but it was opposed on behalf of the Lurgan United Temperance Association; that there was no other opposition of any kind; that the house was large and commodious; that the applicant resided a mile and a half from the house, but his son resided on the premises, and was 30 years of age; that Chief Justice O'Brien said the police appeared to have rather supported the application; that the only suggestion as to the "unfitness of the applicant" was that he was a Catholic, while the majority of the Justices were Protestants; and that, nevertheless, the Queen's Bench felt constrained to refuse even a conditional order to quash the Justices' decision on the ground that the matter was purely within their discretion; was Probate Duty charged on the licence-asset in this case during the 70 years the licence lasted; and will orders be given after this decision, and that of "Sharp *v.* Wakefield," that Probate Duty shall no longer be levied on licensed property; or will a test case be taken to decide whether a licence is a mere precarious asset or a practically permanent property?

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that question may I ask whether it is not a fact that the "large and commodious" premises in question were only 13 feet in front, and 26 feet in depth, that they were old and dilapidated, had a thatched roof and an unenclosed garden, that was open day and night?

MR. GOSCHEN: I cannot answer that question. With regard to the question on the Paper I have to say that, if the facts are as described by the hon. Member, it would appear that the Queen's Bench Division refused the application for a conditional order to quash the Justices' decision on the ground that the matter was within their discretion, and that they had found the applicant unfit and the premises unsuitable. No probate was charged on the will of the late Mr. James Blayney (not Mr. Patrick Blayney), who died in March of this year, as the gross assets were sworn under £100, and the licence was not accounted for an asset, being probably considered of no value, as the concern is a very small one. The same circumstances have probably applied to the licence in question during the last 70 years. This decision, and that of "Sharp *v.* Wakefield" do not convince me that Probate Duty should not be levied on licences. When the goodwill of licences ceases to be bought and sold for valuable considerations, then the time will come to consider whether Probate Duty shall cease to be levied on licensed property.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is it a fact that after a licence had been attached to the premises for 70 years it rests with the Magistrates to take it away. Will the Government allow a test case to be taken to see whether it is legal to continue to charge Probate Duty under the circumstances detailed in the question?

MR. GOSCHEN: Probate Duty is not in the first instance assessed by the Government. It is brought in in the schedule of assets by the executors of a deceased person. If there is no value put on the licence asset, there ought to be.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will lay upon the Table, as Parliamentary Papers, the following documents in connection with the licensing case of "Sharp *v.* Wakefield;" the statement of the case, and the judgments delivered in the Court of Appeal?

*MR. RITCHIE: I have made inquiries as to the case of "Blunt *v.* Byrne," which was cited by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton as a precedent for the hon. Member's proposal. I find that there was no authorised record of that case until the Report revised by the Judge was printed as a Parliamentary Paper, it not being the practice to include Jury cases in the Irish Law Reports. There is, therefore, a clear distinction between that case and the case of "Sharp *v.* Wakefield." But, apart altogether from any question of precedent, I remain of opinion that in the latter case there is no good reason to supplement the authorised Law Reports in the manner proposed.

IRISH LIGHT RAILWAYS.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the West Donegal Railway Company, which is promoting the proposed Light Railway to Killybegs, in the County of Donegal, is notoriously insolvent, judgments having been marked against it for the price of rolling stock, and proceedings for a Receiver being pending; whether the company is largely in arrear for both principal and interest to the Treasury on foot of previous advances; whether the granting of State aid to a company so circumstanced is a violation of the principle laid down by Parliament in Section 4, Subsection 3, of "The Light Railways Act, 1889"; and whether the Killybegs line is that promoted by Mr. Barton, and reported on by Mr. Price?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): I am not aware that the hon. Member is justified in stating that the West Donegal Railway Company is "notoriously insolvent." The company has not yet begun to repay the principal of its debt to the Board of Works; but it is paying over £1,300 a year on account of the £1,600 due for interest, and the Revenue prospects are encouraging. Section 4, Sub-section 3 of the Light Railway Act, 1889, forbids the advance of a loan to a company in arrear with principal and interest, or to a company having a working agreement with a company in arrear. It is not, however, proposed to make any loan to this company. As regards the last paragraph, it would be equally true to say that Major General Hutchinson of the Board of Trade reported on the Killybegs line.

MR. CLANCY: The right hon. Gentleman says it is not intended to make a loan to the railway. Is it intended to make a grant to it?

MR. JACKSON: I am not in a position to say. That was not the question put to me. The question was, whether the Light Railways Act of 1889 forbids the granting of State aid. It does not forbid State aid, but it does forbid a loan.

MR. CLANCY: What guarantee has the Government for the making of the line, seeing that the company by whom it is promoted have been unable to pay their way. Do the Government propose to make a grant to a Railway Company in regard to whom it is not sure that they will be able to pay the working expenses of the line?

MR. JACKSON: The accounts would have to be audited by a person appointed by the Treasury.

MR. CLANCY: Is a grant to be given in this case because the line is promoted by Mr. Barton?

MR. JACKSON: I am not in a position to say that a grant is going to be made, and certainly not because the line is promoted by Mr. Barton.

MR. CLANCY: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether there is any intention or proposal to appoint Mr. Barton, C.E., one of the promoters of the Killybegs Light Railway line, to any position in connection with the construction of light railways in Ireland, in which he would be placed in authority over the projects of rival promoters; and whether, if the Treasury sanction a grant in favour of the Killybegs line, they will put up the further engineering of it in competition?

MR. JACKSON: I am not aware of any such intention.

FAIR RENTS.

MR. LALOR (Queen's Co., Leix): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of cases of appeals from the fair rents fixed by the Sub-Commission for Queen's County that were disposed of by the Chief Commission at its recent sitting; and in how many cases were the rents fixed by the

Sub-Commissions reduced, confirmed, and increased respectively?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners report that 60 Queen's County appeals were listed for hearing at the recent sitting of the Court. Of these, 15 were cross appeals, leaving 45 cases for hearing at the sitting, which were disposed of as follows:—19 withdrawn, seven settled, seven confirmed, six rents raised by the Courts, one rent raised on enlarged area, one rent raised on consent, one adjourned in consequence of death of the party, two adjourned by request of the parties, and one stands over for judgment.

MR. BARRY, P.L G.

DR. TANNER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether a warrant has been issued for the arrest of Mr. Barry, P.L.G., at the instance of a policeman named Drought, against whom Mr. Barry had previously instituted legal proceedings?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that the defendant, having failed to appear to a summons on a charge of assaulting the sergeant, a warrant was issued for his arrest.

TREATMENT OF POLITICAL PRISONERS.

DR. TANNER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the manner in which the police escort behaved to two political prisoners, Messrs. Thomas and William Kent, who were brought from the County Court Gaol to a Court held in Fermoy on Monday the 16th of June, under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; and why and for what reason were the prisoners handcuffed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that the prisoners mentioned were handcuffed at the request of the prison officer who had them in charge with the object of producing them in Court under a writ of *habeas corpus*. The handcuffs were only used when passing through crowds with a small police escort. On the return journey handcuffs were not used, the escort having been increased.

THE BISHOP OF DERRY.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the letter of the Most Rev. Dr. O'Doherty, Bishop of Derry, in the *Freeman's Journal* of the 20th instant, in reference to his statement that

> "The Prisons Board were most anxious that the Bishop should nominate a clergyman (to be chaplain of Derry Gaol), and they requested him to do so, but up to the present he had taken no action;"

whereas his Lordship asserts that, although elected Bishop on 2nd October and consecrated on 2nd March, he never since, directly or indirectly, received any communication from the Prisons Board; can any explanation of the discrepancy be given; what were "the evil effects of the action of the Roman Catholic Bishop" of which he complained; and did Sir Lintorn Simmons, while in Rome, or any other English official, make any representations to the Ecclesiastical Authorities of the Catholic Church upon the action of the Lord Bishop of Derry or his clergy?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not seen the letter referred to. Apparently, the Bishop trusted to the *Freeman's Journal* report. I mentioned the vicar capitular. There is, therefore, no discrepancy. It was presumed that the new Bishop would be acquainted with business affecting the diocese brought before the *locum tenens* who presided over the See. I am glad to think that the failure to appoint a chaplain may be due to this opinion being erroneous. The matter has been now formally brought to the attention of the present Bishop. The last question should be addressed to the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

MR. T. M. HEALY: What does the right hon. Gentleman refer to when he speaks of evil effects?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I stated before that the evil effects of the failure of the Roman Catholic Authorities were that a great number of prisoners of that religion are deprived of the religious services of their Church.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman apologise to the Bishop for this statement?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is not necessary to apologise to him; if he will read the account of what passed in the fuller report in the *Times*, he will see that the only attack, if it can be said that I made any attack, was that either he did not consider himself bound to know what took place while his predecessor was in office, or, having made himself acquainted with what had taken place, he did not take the necessary steps to appoint a chaplain.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman says he does not read the *Freeman's Journal;* does he expect the Roman Catholic Bishops to read the *Times?*

RIFLE RANGES IN IRELAND.

MR. J. REDMOND (Wexford, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is the intention of Government to rent or purchase, at Castlecomer, a new rifle range for the use of troops stationed at Kilkenny; whether, about five years ago, on the advice of experienced officers, the lease of the rifle range at Duncannon was renewed at a yearly rental of £130, and that this lease has still many years to run; whether any difficulty has been found in accommodating troops in the excellent barracks at Duncannon Fort, and in tents in the Fort; and whether he can explain on what grounds it has been determined to give up this old station, and to sacrifice many hundreds of pounds which must be paid to the owners of the Duncannon range during the unexpired years of the lease?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: In an answer given to the hon. Member for North Kilkenny on the 26th November, 1888, it was shown that a range in the neighbourhood of Kilkenny was much required, but that serious local difficulties had occurred in acquiring the necessary ground at Castlecomer. Those difficulties are now, I hope, about to be overcome, and a range will be formed for the troops in Kilkenny. The range at Duncannon Fort is held for 21 years from 1885, at a rental of £125 a year, and it will still be used for the troops at Waterford and Wexford. There is no difficulty in accommodating troops at Duncannon Fort; but a large expense in transport will be saved if a range be established near Kilkenny.

SCHOOLS AT TIPPERARY.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has seen the statement in the *Times* of the 20th instant, to the effect that a number of children attending the Convent and National Schools, Tipperary, left, because the children of some policemen were received as pupils; that they marched through the streets in a body, and were eventually dispersed by the police; and what was the reason for their dispersal?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that it is the case that on the 18th, 19th, and 20th instant children stayed away from the Convent and National Schools, Tipperary, on account of the children of the police and other boycotted people attending those schools. On the 18th the procession was not disorderly, and was not interfered with. On the 19th it was disorderly, and two flags were taken from it, whereupon it dispersed. On the 20th some grown lads joined the procession, stones were thrown from it at a tenant who was believed to have paid his rent. A little girl was seriously injured by being struck upon the head with one of the stones. Two policemen arriving upon the scene, the procession dispersed.

PRISON WARDERS.

MR. O'KEEFFE (Limerick, City): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, as the Prisons Board have reported that one warder has complained of being subjected to annoyance in public while wearing the prison official uniform, if such warder has attributed such annoyance arose from belief that warders were engaged in odious duties as regards Irish political prisoners?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The warder referred to did not make any such allegation as that suggested in the question. His objection was one on general grounds. He mentioned one instance in which a drunken man had insulted him.

TULLAMORE GAOL.

MR. O'KEEFFE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will direct the discontinuance of the rule that after every interview of a solicitor with a client in an Irish gaol, as admitted in the case of the interview of Mr. J. J. O'Meara and Mr. M'Enery in Tullamore Prison last week, "that such prisoner is searched;" whether on the occasion of the visit of Mr. M'Gough, solicitor to Mr. Finucane, M.P., last year in the same prison, the interview took place in a private room, and not in a corridor in sight of warders, as in Mr. M'Enery's case; and if he will explain the reason of the change?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The General Prisons Board report that the question of searching of prisoners for prohibited articles lies in the discretion of the Governor, who is responsible for preventing the introduction of such articles into the prison. On the occasion referred to in the second paragraph the prisoner was in hospital, and the interview was in one of the vacant wards, but, as usual, under the observation of an officer, through an opening in the door.

THE OLPHERT ESTATE.

MR. DALTON (Donegal, W.) postponed until Tuesday a question to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the proceedings at Falcarragh Petty Sessions, on Tuesday the 17th, in which a man named Peter M'Ginley was charged by a bailiff on the Olphert Estate named Conaghan with assault, and in which, on a cross summons, Conaghan was charged by M'Ginley with assault and with having presented a revolver at him and threatened to shoot him, and to the decision of the Court, consisting of two Resident Magistrates, that, though Conaghan's conduct was reprehensible in this case and generally in going about the country with a revolver and threatening to shoot people M'Ginley should be imprisoned for a fortnight and then be held to bail to keep the peace for 12 months, while Conaghan should be held to bail merely; whether he will direct the attention of the Lord Lieutenant to to this decision with a view to the remission of at least the latter part of the sentence inflicted on M'Ginley, who would appear to have acted only in self-defence against a murderous attack on his life; whether the bailiff Conaghan was given a licence to carry firearms; and, if so, by whom, and whether his licence will now be withdrawn; and whether, in view of the fact that this is the third instance within a recent period of human life being threatened in the Falcarragh district by persons licensed to carry firearms, a revision of the list of persons so licensed will be ordered with a view to the removal from it of the names of all persons who have abused the privilege conferred upon them, or who have not furnished satisfactory guarantees that they will use the privilege with discretion?

FERMOY PETTY SESSIONS.

DR. TANNER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland by whose orders were two Magistrates present at the Fermoy Petty Sessions to hear a summons for assault brought by Mr. Barber, a newspaper correspondent of Fermoy, against a policeman named Kelly, on Monday the 16th instant; whether it is usual for two Resident Magistrates to attend ordinary Sessions; and, whether Mr. Hodder, R.M., is a Magistrate for the County Clare?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Two Resident Magistrates attended at Fermoy on the occasion in question to adjudicate in cases under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act. It is not usual for two Resident Magistrates to attend ordinary Petty Sessions, except where they may happen to be available or their services required; the reply to the inquiry in the last paragraph is in the affirmative.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

MR. H. T. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the large and increasing expenditure of time consumed by the putting and answering of questions, many of them involving matters of no public importance, the Government will consider the possibility of dealing with this serious hindrance to public business by restricting the number of questions to be put by any one Member; by not allowing a question to be put by proxy or to be put a second time, should the Member putting it on the Paper not be in his place when called upon; by limiting the number of questions to be put to a fixed number, Members to ballot for places, except in the case of a question asked by special leave of Mr. Speaker; or by fixing a certain time, say half an hour, as the time permitted for questions?

**MR. W. H. SMITH: I am quite sensible of the great waste of time that takes place in consequence of the great increase in the number of questions; but I am afraid the only way of altering the present system would be by new Rules of Procedure, and the time will not admit of such a course.

MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): On this subject may I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has considered the suggestion made to him the other day that the Irish Constabulary Vote should be taken on an early day?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I do not know whether that question arises out of this, but I will endeavour to make arrangements for taking the Irish Constabulary Vote as soon as possible consistently with the other business.

THE LAW OFFICERS OF THE CROWN.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in accordance with his promise made on 12th November, 1888, he has examined carefully into the *status* of the Law Officers of the Crown, in order to see whether it would be advisable that they should continue to be allowed to take private practice; what conclusion the Government have come to on the subject; and what steps they propose to take in order to prevent the public duties of the Law Officers from being interfered with by their private practice?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The question has been receiving the careful consideration of Her Majesty's Government; but, as I have stated before, it is one more for the decision of a future Government, as no change is practicable while the present Law Officers are in office. I may say, however, that no inconvenience or injury to the public interests will be caused by the present practice.

THE SWEATING SYSTEM.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government have abandoned the idea of legislating this Session in accordance with the suggestions contained in the Report of the Lords Committee on the Sweating System.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary informs me that he is preparing a Bill on this most important subject, and that there are some amendments to the existing law which, if the general consent of Members interested was forthcoming, might even, in what remains of the Session, be passed into law. The Government could not attempt to deal this Session with any controversial parts of the subject.

THE LOCAL TAXATION BILL.

MR. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if it is the intention of the Government to proceed with the extinction of licences clauses of the Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Duties Bill?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Government have had under their consideration the Amendments on the Paper to this Bill, and the nature of the opposition directed against it, and they have arrived at the conclusion that it is practically impossible in the present state of public business to pass the Bill in its entirety without calling on the House to submit to sacrifices the Government do not feel themselves justified in imposing. The licensing proposals in the Bill consists of three parts—(1) The allocation of a certain portion of the new taxation on intoxicating liquor for the purpose of extinguishing licences; (2) the power proposed to be conferred on County Councils to purchase and extinguish licences; (3) the suspension of the issue of new licences. The first of these proposals has received the assent of the House, both on the Second Reading of the Bill and after much discussion in Committee, so far as England is concerned. The Government, therefore, propose to proceed with the clauses dealing with the same point so far as Scotland and Ireland are concerned, thus setting aside the sum originally allocated for this special purpose. So far as the second part is concerned—the conferring of power on the County Councils to purchase licences—the Government do not propose to proceed with these clauses, at which the great bulk of the

Amendments are directed, but they will ask the House to insert words the effect of which will be to allow the fund for the extinction of licences to accumulate until Parliament deals with the whole licensing question. This is very similar to the Amendment proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford. The third part of the licensing portion of the Bill is one which it is believed commends itself to all Parties in the House, I mean the suspension of the issue of new licences, and the Government propose to proceed with it. It will thus be seen that the practical result of the change proposed by the Government will be that the money will remain earmarked for the purpose of the extinction of licences under any general reform of the Licensing Laws to which Parliament may assent; but that until this takes place the money, instead of being available for the purpose of extinction of licences by the County Councils, will be allowed to accumulate. Accordingly, Sub-section 2 of the clause now under consideration, as amended, will read that—

> "The sum of £50,000 shall be applied to the purpose of such extinction of licences in Scotland as may be hereafter provided by any Act amending the Licensing Acts, and until such Act is passed shall be invested and accumulated as provided by this Act."

According to this, Clauses 5, 6, and 7 will disappear from the Bill.

Mr. CAINE: Arising out of the question, I wish to ask whether it is the intention of the Government during the present Parliament to introduce any measure amending the Licensing Laws so that this Amendment may be applied?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I think the hon. Gentleman must be satisfied to postpone any question of that kind until we have arrived at a further stage in the history of the present Parliament.

Sir W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): May I be allowed to give notice that there are a number of us who will oppose as steadfastly as we possibly can any proposal to vote any money to the purchase or extinction of licences.

THE METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Sir W. HARCOURT (Derby): I should like to ask a question of the right hon. Gentleman of which I have given him private notice—whether, in view of the anxiety at present prevailing with regard to the Metropolitan Police Force, he will make arrangements for the speedy settlement of the question by proceeding with the Police Superannuation Bill, and fixing the Second Reading for—I would suggest—tomorrow?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I trust the announcement I have made will shorten discussion on the Licensing Bill. I think it ought to do so, and therefore I hope that it will be in the power of the Government to propose the Second Reading of the Police Bill next week at the latest. Certainly it will follow on this Bill as soon as it is possible to make arrangements.

CIVIL SERVANTS.

Mr. SAMUELSON (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state how many Civil servants over the age of 70 years are drawing salaries of £500 and upwards, and what total number of years' service under the Crown each of these has given, including broken and continuous service; whether in the interests of economy and the efficiency of the service, and considering the probable paucity of such veterans, he will consider the advisability of retiring them upon pensions as liberal as can be granted under Section 9 of "The Superannuation Act, 1859," such pensions to be based upon the total number of years they have served under the Crown, irrespectively of the total period of service having been broken?

Mr. JACKSON: There are no central records immediately available which would enable me to answer the first part of the hon. Member's question. There is power to require the retirement on the ordinary pension rates of any officer who is unequal to the performance of the duties of his position, and the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments has reported in favour of the retirement of Civil servants at 65 on ordinary pension. Section 9 of the Superannuation Act only permits special pensions to be given in recompense for special service, and it is not, therefore, applicable to the cases mentioned by the hon. Member.

DERRY GAOL.

Mr. HARRISON (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Report made on the sanitary condition of Derry Gaol by the expert who was commissioned to investigate it; also, to ask whether an official from the English Prison Department visited Derry Gaol in the autumn of 1889 with a view to professionally examining into its sanitary condition; if so, whether he is prepared to lay this official's Report upon the Table of the House?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I will lay the Report.

THE LIMERIGG POST OFFICE.

Mr. J. BOLTON (Stirling): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he is aware that the Sub-post Office at Limerigg, Slamannan, Stirlingshire, has been closed for about a month, to the great inconvenience of the residents in that district; and if he can state that the office will be re-opened, and when?

Mr. JACKSON: I have been asked by my right hon. Friend to answer this question. The Post Office at Limerigg will be re-opened as soon as a suitable person for the situation of Sub-Postmaster can be selected and instructed in the duties of the office. The inconvenience which has been caused by the temporary closing of the office is regretted, but was unavoidable, and every effort will be made to re-open it at an early date.

H.M.S. *TRIUMPH.*

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether his attention has been directed to the obstruction caused by the position of the present guardship *Triumph* stationed in Cork Harbour; whether he is aware that, in swinging at change of tides, the ship obstructs the entire channel; and why she is not moored in that part of the harbour known as the Man-of-War Roads, instead of the narrowest portion of the river near the town of Cove?

*Lord G. HAMILTON: The *Triumph* is so moored as to leave a sufficient passage for navigation on either side, whichever way she swings, and no complaints have been made either to the Admiralty or the Naval Authorities at Queenstown on the subject. There are serious objections to mooring the ship in the Man-of-War Roads, and as the present arrangement has been agreed to by the Cork Harbour Commissioners, I see no reason at present for any change.

GREAT TURK AND CAICOS ISLANDS.

Dr. TANNER: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any inquiry will be made into the condition of the people resident in the Great Turk and Caicos Islands; and whether, considering the recent Colonial Report upon the chronic destitution there prevailing, some practical steps will be taken to relieve and remedy the poor people's pressing wants?

Baron H. de WORMS: No such inquiry is proposed, as the Secretary of State learns from periodical Reports that the inhabitants, though not well off, are as prosperous as those of many other parts of the West Indies, and that they are cheerful and orderly. The destitution mentioned in the Report for 1888, to which I presume the hon. Member refers, was exceptional, and was caused by the hurricane; but a sum of between £800 and £1,000 appears to have been spent by the local Relief Committee upon the sufferers by that calamity. The prosperty of the poorer class depends chiefly on the salt industry, which fluctuates from year to year, but it is hoped that the fibre industry will shortly be introduced. The Commissioners of Turks Islands have spared no pains to ameliorate the condition of the people; a savings bank has been established, and has been eagerly taken advantage of; and mail communication with the islands has been improved.

HELIGOLAND.

Lord H. BRUCE (Wilts, Chippenham): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, before Heligoland is handed over to a Foreign Power, the wishes of the inhabitants will be consulted as to their remaining under the Union Jack?

*The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith, Strand, Westminster): I am afraid I must ask my noble Friend to be satisfied with the numerous answers which have been already given on the subject. We believe the Agreement to be one which will certainly not be to the disadvantage of the Heligolanders.

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman state to the House whether the question of the cession of Heligoland did not come from Germany?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am sure that the hon. Member will see that that is a question which ought not to be put in this House.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any steps have been taken to ascertain the views of the inhabitants of Heligoland on the subject of the proposed cession of the island to Germany; and whether it is intended that, in the event of the cession taking place, the inhabitants shall be liable to military service?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: No steps have been taken to ascertain the views of the inhabitants of Heligoland. It is intended that all existing inhabitants shall be exempted from compulsory military service.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask wether a recent demonstration in Heligoland has not proved conclusively that the inhabitants wish to remain connected with this country; and whether the attention of the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs has been drawn to the statement in the *Pall Mall Gazette* that the people are extremely hostile to the proposed cession of the island?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I have no official information of these statements.

NEWFOUNDLAND.

MR. W. REDMOND: I will ask whether any information has reached the Foreign Office with regard to the alleged conflict between French and Newfoundland fishermen, and what steps the Government propose to take to bring the dispute to a settlement?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I am not in a position to answer that question. Perhaps the hon. Member will put it down for to-morrow.

MR. W. REDMOND: I will.

ALLEGED SHADOWING OF ENGLISH LADIES IN IRELAND.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland by what authority and upon what evidence or suspicion of crime or criminal intent were three English ladies shadowed by the police in Tipperary on or about the 8th or 9th of July of last year?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that no English ladies were shadowed at Tipperary last July, as alleged in the question.

MR. CONYBEARE: I stated last week the names of the three ladies who were shadowed. Does the right hon. Gentleman presume to set the statement of the Royal Irish Constabulary against the word of these ladies?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; but I think it is very likely the ladies were mistaken.

THE METROPOLITAN POLICE.

MR. H. L. W. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): I wish to ask the Home Secretary whether it is true that the new Chief Commissioner of Police has forbidden the Metropolitan Police to hold meetings of any kind for the discussion of their grievances?

MR. MATTHEWS: The only prohibition of which I have heard is the prohibition of a meeting at Bow Street in special circumstances. The Commissioner of Police has prohibited that meeting, but he has informed the men that their wishes and desires can be communicated in the regular way to the Government.

THE LICENSING CLAUSES OF THE LOCAL TAXATION BILL.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): Having listened with satisfaction to the announcement of the right hon. Gentleman as to the efforts which he has made to shorten the Debates upon the Licensing Bill; and bearing in mind that we are placed in some difficulty by the fact that we are to consider at once some of the Amendments which he has announced, I would ask him, as this particular proposal does not touch the substance of the proposals of the Government, whether he will consider the propriety of giving up the ear-marking of this money? That proposal has no practical effect, and I believe that the withdrawal of it would not weaken the position of the Government, and would greatly simplify the passage of a large portion of the Ministerial scheme.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I appreciate the spirit which has prompted the question of the right hon. Gentleman, but the Government cannot disregard the fact that this principle has received the approval of the House by a considerable majority. The Government do attach importance to this question. The money is to accumulate, to be at the disposal and under the direction of Parliament on future occasions. I will read the words again for the information of the right hon. Gentleman—

> "The sum of £50,000 shall be applied for the purpose of such extinction of licences in Scotland as may be hereafter provided by any Act amending the Licensing Acts, and until such Act is passed shall be invested and accumulated as provided by this Act."

The money, therefore, will remain at the disposal of Parliament.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): That leaves the Irish Question exactly where it was. Are we to understand that the section applying to Ireland is to remain as it stands?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I certainly propose that the words shall stand.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the object of the great majority of the Scotch Members is to obtain this sum of £50,000 for the advancement of free education, and does the right hon Gentleman propose, by pressing this ear-marking clause, to announce the determination of the Government to disappoint the nearly unanimous wish of Scotchmen?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I need hardly point out to the right hon. Gentleman that it is almost impossible to meet the wishes of everybody in this House. We are obliged to adhere to the plan we have indicated.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is not the right hon. Gentleman ashamed to announce nakedly——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. T. M. HEALY: I withdraw that expression. I recognise that I went too far; but I wish to ask, how is it that the Government are not afraid to assert nakedly that in the case of Ireland this money is to be used for the extinction of licences? Why are not the words in the Scotch and Irish clauses to be the same?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: There is no difference between the proposed application of the money in the case of Scotland and the application of it in the case of Ireland. The hon. and learned Member must have misunderstood my statement.

MR. STOREY (Sunderland): Is there any precedent for passing an Act of Parliament for the purpose of creating a fund to be hereafter used in this or a future Parliament?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It has been done.

MR. C. J. DARLING (Deptford): I would ask whether, if this ear-marking clause is passed, it will in any way prevent Parliament from dealing with the money in another Session, or even in this, precisely as it pleases?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I know of nothing that can prevent Parliament from dealing with the money as it may think fit.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Does the Chief Secretary intend to persevere with the provisions relating to new licences, seeing that, as drawn, they are wholly inapplicable to the condition of Ireland?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is my intention to persevere with the proposals. If it should be shown to be necessary, the words will be altered to meet the case of Ireland.

MR. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.): Does the right hon. Gentleman intend to tell the House that if the clause applying the money to the purpose of extinguishing licences is passed, it will be possible for Parliament to deal with the money anew without first repealing the clause?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Certainly not.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I would suggest that, after the announcement of the First Lord of the Treasury, it would be advisable to postpone the further consideration of the Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Bill and to proceed this evening with other Orders.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I may remind the hon. Member that the Committee have now under consideration the 1st sub-section of the clause, and that it does not involve any reference to the question of the extinction of licences. Therefore, it would be quite out of the question to adjourn it further.

SIR W. HARCOURT: But we shall come almost immediately to the 2nd sub-section, upon which the whole question will arise. I endorse the appeal of my hon. Friend that we should be given time in which to consider the character of the Government's proposals. The matter is very important, for if what the right hon. Gentleman opposite calls the ear-marking provision is inscribed in the Statute Book, supposing that in a future Session or future Parliament the House of Commons does not approve of applying the money to the purpose of the extinction of licences, it could not be applied to any other purpose without the consent of the House of Lords. We are to be committed in this Session to appropriating this money and accumulating it in future years to the purchase of licences, and that policy cannot be altered in the future without the consent of the House of Lords. If that is so, the right hon. Gentleman has done nothing to shorten the proceedings on this Bill.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I think it is perhaps undesirable that I should enter into an argument on this question.

MR. T. M. HEALY: It is very desirable.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not sure whether it is perfectly in order to do so. I will only point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the proposal the Government has made was embodied in the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford, and for which he voted last week.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Not to be devoted to licensing.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The effect of the proposal of the Government is substantially the same, only it is of a much more extended character, as the Amendment proposed by the right hon. Member for Central Bradford last week. The proper course, undoubtedly, is to discuss the question when we arrive at the sub-section in Committee, and I think I shall then be able to satisfy the right hon. Gentleman. But I must remind him that any Licensing Bill that may pass this House must also be considered by the House of Lords. Therefore, any change in the present system, which we all desire to see changed, must have the approval and concurrence, as I believe it will have, of the other House.

*MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.): I quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman that the sub-section under discussion may be disposed of; but I earnestly appeal to the leader of the House to postpone for one day the 2nd sub-section, so as to allow Scotch Members opportunity to consider the hearing of the Government proposals.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I cannot give any promise to postpone Sub-section 2. When it is reached, the Government will hear the arguments and consider what course they will take.

MR. T. M. HEALY: What objection have the Government to withdrawing the clause? Is the First Lord of the Treasury aware that the Irish law on this subject is quite distinct from that of England?

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Is not the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Attorney General for Ireland has placed on the Paper an Amendment which simply applies the English clause to Ireland, to which it is totally inapplicable.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot venture to offer any opinion as to the value of the objection raised by my hon. Friend opposite to the Amendments of the Government as affecting Ireland; but I believe that, whatever value the objections have, they will apply equally to the Bill of the hon. Member for North Longford. I think the hon. Member will probably see that it will be convenient to deal with Ireland, England, and Scotland in one Bill if it be possible, and I will consider the best method of attaining that object.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to give notice that, as the Irish Members feel that Ireland is vitally interested in the English clause, it will be their duty to put down all their Amendments on the English clause.

THE ORDERS OF THE DAY.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I have to ask whether the attention of the leader of the House has been drawn to the condition of the Notice Paper for this day, there appearing upon it 75 Orders, 30 of which are Government Orders; and whether, in view of the late period of the Session, the right hon. Gentleman will consider the desirability of making a final and definite statement on the subject of the measures to be proceeded with by the Government this Session?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I cannot answer a question of that kind without notice. The course taken by the Government to-night is evidence of their desire to afford every opportunity to the House of making progress with business.

MR. DILLON: I shall repeat the question to-morrow, because, whatever course may be adopted with reference to the Local Taxation Bill, I think there is no hope of our transacting all this business appearing on the Order Paper.

THE INCIDENCE OF IMPERIAL TAXATION.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I wish to remind the Chancellor of the Exchequer that a long time has elapsed since the Government undertook to nominate immediately a Select Committee to inquire into the financial relations of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and I will now ask him to say definitely on what day the terms of the Reference will appear on the Paper?

MR. GOSCHEN: I think I can undertake to bring the matter forward to-morrow. So that there may be agreement on the terms of Reference, I will consult hon. Members who are interested in the subject.

THE PROCLAMATION OF A MEETING AT NORTHAMPTON.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the Home Secretary whether he is aware that a meeting intended to be held in opposition to the Local Taxation Bill in the Market Place, Northampton, on Sunday, was prohibited by the Borough Magistrates on Saturday; whether the Magistrates have any right to prohibit a meeting of law-abiding citizens; and whether there is any special penalty attaching to any one attending such a meeting after this prohibition?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am afraid the question involves some difficult points of law, and I must have notice before giving a full answer. I assume that the Magistrates had reasonable ground for anticipating that there would be a breach of the peace or some disorder.

MR. BRADLAUGH: With reference to the answer just given, I will ask whether the Queen's Bench Division has not positively decided that Magistrates have no authority whatever to prohibit a meeting which seems likely to endanger the public peace; and whether this is not laid down in every recent text-book?

SIR W. LAWSON: I have to ask whether the disorder anticipated at Northampton was anticipated to come from the promoters of the meeting or from the supporters of the Government?

THE INDIAN COUNCILS BILL.

MR. BRADLAUGH: To what day will the Indian Councils Bill be postponed?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Next Monday.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to,—Municipal Elections (Scotland) Bill; Kew and Petersham Vicarage Bill, without amendments.

That they have passed a Bill intituled "An Act to amend the Law in regard to the Education of Blind and Deaf-mute Children in Scotland." Education of Blind and Deaf-Mute Children (Scotland) Bill [Lords].

MOTIONS.

POLICE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of The Lord Advocate, Bill to make provision respecting the pensions, allowances, and gratuities of Police Constables in Scotland, and their widows and children, and to make other provisions respecting the Police of Scotland, ordered to be brought in by The Lord Advocate and Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 353.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ABRIDGED PROCEDURE ON PARTLY CONSIDERED BILLS.

*(5.11.) MR. W. H. SMITH: In moving the appointment of the Select Committee on Procedure, I shall not detain the House for more than a few minutes, as the object in view was explained a few days ago. In submitting this Motion we have taken advantage of the experience and thought of right hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House, because it is one of those questions on which I should strongly deprecate any vital difference of opinion. During the last 50 years frequent attempts have been made to deal with

this question in this and in the other House of Parliament. It has been felt that some method of procedure which would save the time of the House and enable it to be more usefully directed to the consideration of measures of great detail would be exceedingly valuable. The system suggested exists in many other Parliaments in Europe and in the Congress of the United States, and it is one which I think the Parliaments who have adopted it would be extremely loth to part with. I do not propose to enter into any long statement with regard to the Standing Order which I had intended to submit to the House. It seems to me that it would be more respectful to the Committee that they should be left perfectly free and they should be asked to consider the form of procedure. It will be the duty of the Government to submit to the Committee the Standing Order which they had drawn up, and which it had been intended to submit to the House. I will only remark that the view of the Government, as expressed in the Standing Order, was confined entirely to Bills originating in the House of Commons. It did not propose to deal with Bills which originated in the other House or which have come down to us from that House, but it was intended to provide for the House of Commons improved methods of dealing with their own Bills and Bills which require careful and exhaustive consideration. I trust I shall be excused if I refrain from doing anything more than expressing an earnest desire that the consideration of this important subject will result in an arrangement that will increase the usefulness and maintain the high character of this House. I move the Resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire whether by means of an abridged form of Procedure, or otherwise, the consideration of Bills, which have been partly considered in this House could be facilitated in the next ensuing Session of the same Parliament."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I can only say that I hope the few words I intend to speak on the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman will have the effect of promoting a speedy and summary decision. The right hon. Gentleman has exhibited a conciliatory spirit in adopting the idea that the important suggestion he desired to make to the House should go before a Select Committee—a course agreeable to precedents in similar cases and agreeable also to the reason of the case. The right hon. Gentleman has said one or two words on the subject of the Standing Order of which he had previously given notice, and into that I think it is better I should not attempt to follow him; it is better to leave the matter entirely free and open for the unprejudiced consideration of the Committee. It is obvious that under the terms of reference the Committee will be in a condition either to adopt the right hon. Gentleman's Standing Order or to recommend any other, or to suggest proceeding by Bill, or to make any report they think proper. I recognise that, in proposing a Committee of this kind, it is the duty of the Government to assume a leadership and responsibility, and to submit something to the House for its consideration. That being so, I have no doubt that my hon. Friend behind me, who gave notice of a Motion, will have something to say. But I earnestly hope that, pressed as we are with business, and having another matter immediately before us for consideration when this is disposed of, we may get to that subject as soon as possible. Therefore, I hope the House will allow the question raised by the right hon. Gentleman to be put from the Chair as speedily as possible.

(5.17.) Mr. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): Surely, Mr. Speaker, we do not require a Select Committee to tell us whether by means of an abridged form of procedure we can facilitate the business of the House. We could answer that question at once, and in the affirmative. The question is, is it desirable to adopt such a means of facilitating the business. It seems to me that the terms of reference to the Select Committee, as they are now worded, will confine the inquiry to the most formal and bald point; and, in fact, the Report of the Committee can be at once foreseen.

*(5.19.) Mr. BRADLAUGH: The Resolution is intended to effect what ought to be effected by direct enactment. There is a precedent going very near to this to be found in the 1 Geo. IV., cap. 101, sec. 4, with reference to Indian Divorce Bills, and I believe the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman, which is not yet in print, proposes to do exactly

what was declared could not be done in that case, *i.e.*, to continue Bills from one Session to another. He is proposing to do by evasion that which certainly, according to precedent, should be done by direct enactment. As this precedent does not appear in the Paper of precedents circulated this morning, I felt it my duty to call attention to it.

(5.20.) MR. WHITBREAD (Bedford): I do not want to prolong the discussion, especially after the appeal so very generously made by my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian, but I must say I think it is open to remark that the proposals of the Government have been made hastily and without that careful consideration which this House has always been accustomed to give when its Rules of Procedure are proposed to be altered. The timely intervention of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian saved the Government from committing a tremendous blunder, and from taking a step as revolutionary as it is possible to imagine with regard to public business. I am glad to see that now the right hon. Gentleman harks back to sound precedent in dealing with this question. I think his Motion should have been more carefully worded. He tells us now it is not proposed that this new Rule or Standing Order shall apply to Bills coming from the House of Lords. But the Notice he gave the other night said nothing about that. It is most important that the proposed Standing Order should not apply to Bills coming from the Lords, but the Order which the First Lord of the Treasury was intending to thrust upon the House said nothing about excluding such Bills. That Notice certainly excluded Money Bills and Bills coming back from the Lords with Amendments, and I should think the exclusion of those Bills meant the inclusion of all others. I, for one, should not tacitly assent to the appointment of the Committee but for the assurance of the First Lord that the Rule will not apply to Bills coming from the Lords. It would be a very grave matter to allow it to so apply. Let us take a hypothetical case. In one Session this House might be engaged on a very contentious Bill, and send it up to the Lords, who, under the Standing Order, send it over to the next Session. But, before the Session arrived, public opinion becomes so manifest against the Bill that the Government cannot rely even upon its own majority to carry the Bill. Yet, if the Lords chose, they could pass it without Amendment, and the House could not prevent them doing so. That would be a very grave thing. I protest against the modern practice of constantly rushing to a change in the Rules of Procedure to meet the temporary exigencies of the Government. The House has had nearly enough of such changes in late years, changes which have not been fortunate in their result. I doubt whether they are calculated to expedite public business. I am glad the First Lord has been prevented setting another precedent. A Parliament armed with the Closure, which was granted for the purpose of bringing protracted Debates to an end, but which has been used for the purpose of forcing through the House Bills vitally affecting the liberties of the subject—a Parliament which has been the first of all Parliaments to declare itself incompetent to deal with questions affecting the character and honour of its Members, has done enough in the way of setting bad precedents. I believe that the Parliamentary difficulty is merely a symptom on the surface. You must look much deeper for the real evil. There is some danger in these days of depending too much on violent solutions of temporary difficulties. The House must not lose its faith in the power of argument as an effective weapon; it must not depend too much on mere mechanical forces and rules. I would much rather try to work on under the old rules than fly to others the evils of which we know not of.

(5.30.) MR. J. LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): I do not wish to carry this conversation further, and my only object in rising is to enter a *caveat* in regard to the observations of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), who appeared to be under the impression that there would be before the Committee only two alternatives, namely, to recommend that the procedure for carrying this change into effect shall be either by Standing Order or by Bill. There was a third course.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Or not to proceed at all.

MR. J. LOWTHER: That just covers the point I desire to make. I do not want the House to be under the impression that there is a universal concurrence in favour of doing anything at all. There are many Members who object altogether to the principle of the proposed system of piecemeal legislation. The Committee will have the power, and I hope will exercise it, of reporting against any change of rules.

(5.32.) MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I think the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian was much too indulgent to Her Majesty's Government. The House, no doubt, is always willing, upon good cause shown, to re-consider the question of its procedure, but the fact ought not to be overlooked that this proposed change in procedure, and this demand for a Committee, is due to the reckless endeavour of Her Majesty's Government to drive three coaches abreast through Temple Bar. But for the condition in which the business of the Session now is, owing to the mismanagement of the Government, no such proposed change as this would have been dreamt of. The suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, for the appointment of a Committee, was only a counter-proposal to that of the Government, and as such was deserving of respectful consideration. But the condition is quite different when the Government bring forward this proposal, and ask us to accept the Committee without discussion and without protest. How is this Committee to be constituted? Are the Government going to put on only their sworn supporters and leave out Members who hold independent views on this subject, like the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet (Mr. J. Lowther)? I sat on a Committee on public business in 1886. It was a very strong Committee. It was presided over by the present chief of the Liberal Unionist Party (Lord Hartington), and among its members was the present President of the Board of Trade (Sir M. Hicks Beach). We considered the question of procedure for over a month, and the Conservative Government, in the following Session, came down to the House with Resolutions, in which they ignored every recommendation we made. You are now going to constitute a fresh Committee. You do not ask that the Committee of Selection, which is a most impartial body, whose authority we are all ready to recognise, should appoint the members of the Committee. I object entirely to the terms in which this Resolution has been placed on the Paper. We listened with great respect to the very weighty words of the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread). It is easy to say that if you have written a letter over night, you can tear it up in the morning, but there is an important point to consider with regard to the House of Lords. Conservative Members know very well that no Tory Bill sent up to the House of Lords will ever be rejected or suspended by that body. But, supposing a Liberal Government gets in, and passes a Home Rule Bill, is it to be tolerated that the House of Lords should, by Resolution, hang that Bill up for Session after Session? As an Irishman I look back with reverence to the period at which this House was able to consider questions of procedure without reference to this eternal Irish question. You are now beginning to consider every question of procedure with reference to the way in which the Irish difficulty is likely to affect you. It is a most unfortunate state of things, but we are bound, as Irishmen, to look at the way in which procedure proposals are put forward. I am not prepared to accept the suggestion that this is a matter that can be dealt with at all by a Committee. I have come to the conclusion that if this House is to be protected from the House of Lords, the procedure must be by Bill. We do not need a Committee. This is not a domestic proposal, but a proposal affecting Bills in the other House. Then, Sir, there is a snake in the grass. The Committee are to consider the case of Bills that have been partly dealt with in this House. Why should they not also consider Bills which have been wholly dealt with by this House, and rejected by the House of Lords? Why should not such Bills be revived by a single Resolution, and sent back to the House of Lords once more? If the House were candid in this business they would deal with the question as a whole. It is a most unfortunate thing that the proposal should be made to change the entire forms of Parliamentary procedure because of an abandoned and shipwrecked Licensing Bill. You have dropped your Licensing Clauses, but the virus of them is to remain. I would have voted for a Committee as a condition precedent; as a palliative; but I am not prepared to accede to the appointment of a Committee to initiate a proposal to which I object *in toto*. To proceed by way of a Bill is our only safeguard, and I think the Conservative Party ought to hesitate before allowing a proposal to be passed which has simply been provoked by the mismanagement and the misconduct of the Government themselves.

(5.46.) MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I do not quite agree with the letter, although I sympathise with the spirit, of the remarks of the hon. and learned Member for Longford (Mr. T. Healy). The First Lord of the Treasury admits that the principle of the Motion is, that when the House of Commons has once expressed its opinion on a definite legislative proposal, and that proposal has not been carried into law, it is a sheer waste of time to go over the proposal again in the succeeding Session. But the Motion does not entirely carry out the principle, and our objection is that the Motion does not go far enough. The First Lord of the Treasury says he does not wish to tie the hands of the Committee, but he does tie the hands of the Committee. The blot upon the Motion is the introduction of the word "partly," and I suggest that that word should be omitted, so that the Motion would read, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire whether the means of an abridged form of procedure, or otherwise, the consideration of Bills which have been considered in this House, could be facilitated in the next ensuing Session of the same Parliament." The object of my suggestion is perfectly obvious. I wish that when we have completely passed a legislative proposal, and when that legislative proposal has failed, solely because the House of Lords has not accepted it, we should not be compelled to go through the labour of sending it up again to the House of Lords. I have a perfectly good precedent for what I propose. Substantially, this proposal has been made by the House of Lords itself. On page 4 of the Paper on Parliament Proceedings, which has

been put into our hands to-day, it is stated that a Select Committee of the House of Lords, which sat in 1861, resolved:—

> "That it is expedient in certain cases to adopt an abridged form of proceeding with reference to Bills which shall be again brought before this House after having been passed by it in the immediately proceeding Session of the same Parliament."

That is substantially what I am urging on the Government. Then, the same Committee resolved:—

> "That, on a Resolution being moved that it is expedient again to pass and to send to the other House for its concurrence, any such Bill, the question shall be put whether the House will agree to the same, and, on such Resolution being agreed to, the Bill to which it relates shall be forthwith sent to the other House for its concurrence, without any further question being put or any debate allowed."

These Resolutions absolutely carry out the purpose I have in view. There is only one condition in the House of Lords' programme to which I take exception, and that is that the arrangement should only apply to Bills which have not been passed in the House of Lords because there was not time. I propose it should apply to all Bills which have failed to pass either House, whatever the reason. If this Motion is to be carried into effect by a Standing Order of the House, I appeal to my Colleagues on these Benches to insist upon the adoption of my proposal. The Tory Party have a reserve in the House of Lords, but we have not. A Conservative Bill, when once through this House, is perfectly certain of passing through the House of Lords; but, as things stand at present, the House of Lords can compel this House, when Liberals are in a majority, either to dissolve or to waste time in going through its legislative proposals once again. The leader of the Opposition has most magnanimously appealed to his followers not to interpose any factious opposition to the Government's proposal. I shall respect that appeal, but I most respectfully place on record my protest against the limited reference which is being made to this Committee. I am not prepared to move an Amendment at this stage, because I understand that the Report of the Committee must, to be effective, be embodied in a Standing Order or Bill. When the Standing Order or Bill is before us, we shall, if necessary, exercise our right to propose to widen its scope.

*(5.54.) CAPTAIN VERNEY (Bucks, N.): I wish to emphasise what has fallen from hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway as to the extremely bald nature of the words of this Resolution. Hon. Members have pointed out that the words of the Resolution admit of only one reply, namely, "Yes." Hon. Gentlemen have lost sight of the fact that previous Select Committees replied to these words in the negative. One Committee sat in 1848. In 1861 a strong Committee was appointed to consider the proposal, and reported that the objections were grave and numerous, and that the adoption of the proposal would give increased facilities for retarding legislation. That, I think, is an answer in the negative to the question which the Resolution, on the face of it, seems to carry. Perhaps one of the most important questions which is touched by this Resolution is that of the prerogative of the Crown. If the House of Commons is able to carry a Bill on to the next Session, and the prorogation of Parliament does not put an end of the Bill, that is a restriction or limiting of the prerogative of the Crown. If, on the other hand, the sanction of the Crown must first be obtained, there is an enlargement of the prorogative of the Crown, because it will enable the Crown to interfere with legislation before it has passed both Houses of Parliament. It seems to me that that by itself is fatal to this proposal. Perhaps I may call attention to a speech made upon this subject by Sir George Lewis in 1861. He said—

> "I trust the House will not think my noble Friend (Lord Palmerston) has made his Motion for the Select Committee upon this question upon a light ground or for any object of the Government."

We have this Motion made to-day for a special and specific object of the Government.

> "The House will probably bear in mind that last Session there were several Motions presented to it on the subject of its Forms of Proceeding, and certainly we do not submit it with any selfish view of our own."

We have this proposal made without notice and without any demand for it, made solely to serve the selfish ends of the Government. In the same Debate, Mr. Newdegate said—

> "He was greatly indebted to the noble Lord the head of the Government for repeating the pledge he gave last Session, that he would recommend the appointment of a Committee to consider the best method of expediting the progress of business."

The difference between the Resolution then proposed and that proposed to-day was that there was a deliberate wish expressed that the business should be expedited, whereas to-day no such wish had been expressed. Then Sir John Pakington, speaking in the same Debate, said—

> "The great cause of the legislative fractures of last Session is to be attributed to the Government rather than to the House. They were very largely due to the programme of the Ministry, for when they called upon us to consider a French Treaty most complicated, a Reform Bill, and a Bankruptcy Bill, with 500 clauses, all in one Session, their experience must have taught them that such a thing was simply impossible."

These words are applicable to to-day. The Government have attempted to drive three first-class Bills through the House, and that is why we find ourselves in the present position, and not from any inadequacy in the Procedure of the House. This question came before a Select Committee in 1838, and the Committee reported—

> "Your Committee venture to express the opinion that the satisfactory conduct and successful progress of the business of the House must mainly depend on Her Majesty's Government, holding, as they do, the chief control over its management. They believe that by a careful preparation of measures, their early introduction, a judicious distribution of business, and the order and method in which business is conducted, the Government might contribute, in an essential degree, to the easy and convenient conduct of business."

The present Government have got into a muddle. They have tried to force through the House this Session more than is possible; they have shown a want of tact and judgment in the conduct of the business they have brought before the House, and then, as a last resort, instead of endeavouring to conduct the business in an orderly way, they have come to the House and asked for an alteration of the Rules of Procedure. If a Committee is appointed upon the Rules of Procedure in strict accordance with the terms of the Resolution, I do not think the House will be any further advanced. This bald Resolution will not meet the requirements of the case. The right hon. Gentleman has given us no reason why the Committee should be appointed; but though he was careful to avoid it, we all know the reason. If the Committee is appointed and confined within the narrow limits of the Resolution, I do not think its Report can suggest anything that will advance the progress of public business.

(6.1.) MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): We have not had stated the reason why this Committee is to be appointed, but, as I understand, the reason alleged some time ago for a proposal to alter procedure was to afford the House some relief from the condition in which public business is in the present Session. But can this Committee afford us relief in the present Session? By the nature of things it cannot. The Report of the Committee and any suggestions made in that Report for the conduct of business cannot affect the present Session; therefore, all the reason for its appointment vanishes, and there is no urgency for it. This being admitted—and I do not see how it can be gainsaid—the Government having put forward no plea of urgency, is it not in the highest degree desirable that any Committee appointed to consider procedure should be a Committee to deal with other equally or more important questions which might be brought before it? No one can have failed to have been impressed by what fell from the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread), a Member of unparalleled knowledge and experience of procedure. That hon. Member pointed out the extreme undesirability and inconvenience of continually having recurrence to alterations of procedure in this House, and we have had a long experience now, even many of us whose service here has been very much shorter than that of the hon. Member, of the result of the Government having recourse to an alteration of Rules to meet a specific purpose. Let us judge by the result of experience. What has been the result of all the alterations since 1877? The result is that in this Session public business is in an unparalleled condition, worse than ever it was in any Session before the passing of the four successive alterations in procedure. After all these alterations the Government have landed us in this condition, and now, instead of looking at the question from a broad and statesmanlike point of view; instead of dealing with the whole subject with a view to the future; instead of instituting inquiry by a Committee which would take into consideration not only the general question of procedure, the length of the Session, and so forth, but which also should be empowered to consider how it has arisen that, in spite of repeated alterations, we have business in this state of confusion and arrear, we have this bald and timid proposal. Now, I propose to move an Amendment; and my idea is that if it should be found necessary to proceed once more to the alteration of our Rules, then the Committee should be empowered to take into consideration other things; for instance, that most valuable proposal in relation to the time of prorogation made by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division (Sir G. Trevelyan), a proposal which seemed to recommend itself generally to the House. I think this proposal carries far greater hope of solid improvement in the business of the House than anything contained in the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith). The Committee ought to inquire into the general management of business during the Session, and also into that question which seems to be one of growing importance—the practice of postponing the Estimates to the very end of the Session. There are many other questions that ought to be taken into consideration when a Committee sits upon procedure; and I want to know what considerations prevent the reference of these to the Committee, for we have had no grounds of urgency put forward, no reason why the Committee should be confined to the narrow terms of reference read out to the House? If the question of procedure is to be opened at all, the Committee should be left free to consider the whole conduct of business; the period of assembling, the period of prorogation, and all other matters touching the business of the House. The extreme inconvenience of the proposal that has been made has been pointed out by the hon. Member for Bedford, and I can add nothing to the weight of his statement; but I think Conservative Members should hesitate before they assent to the proposal. We know that in America, and in Democratic forms of Government, the most extreme Radical section favour the most violent alterations in Parliamentary procedure. If you set us the example of continual alteration of Rules for a specific purpose without allowing the Committee to consider the subject in all its bearings—if you set us this example of recurring to an alteration of procedure when the Government get into difficulties, you will find the Radical Party very apt to follow the precedent you set; and the time may come when you will find yourselves, as an Opposition, tightly fettered, and we shall refer to this example you are now setting us. This Motion was originally announced on the plea that the business of the country could not be done in the present Session; but what relief will this Motion bring to business in the present Session, and what relief in the approaching Session? Absolutely no relief at all, except that, possibly, if the Committee report favourably, you may spare the House two or three days' discussion on the Second Reading of the Land Purchase Bill. Now, are Conservative and Independent Members of the House prepared to set this precedent, that they are ready to alter the procedure of the House of Commons for no purpose under the sun except to save three days' discussion on the Irish Land Purchase Bill? What other result can follow the consideration of the Committee with this reference? True, we may be spared the re-discussion of this Bill on Second Reading, but in order to secure that the right hon. Gentleman is prepared to sacrifice at least two nights of the present Session when the Government are driven to the greatest extremity for time. We are placed in an unparalleled position, and the only proposal the Government make for relief is that we shall waste one or two more nights in discussing a change of procedure which can give us no relief this Session, and can give us but trifling relief next Session. In the whole history of Parliament never was a more inane set of proposals submitted for the relief of public business. I shall say no more on this aspect of the question. I propose to move an addition to the Resolution in the following terms:—

> "And by what means it can be secured that the consideration of Supply shall be taken before some fixed date."

I do not see what good purpose the Committee is to serve as regards this Session; but if the Committee is to be appointed, the time has come when this serious growing grievance should be brought under notice and carefully considered; that this portion of the business of the country, the first mentioned in the Queen's Speech to the House, which is the primary and essential duty of the House of Commons to the exclusion of all legislation if it becomes a question of choice, that this business should be postponed to suit the convenience of Ministers to such a period of the Session as to turn discussion into a mockery and a farce. It is useless to set about the discussion of Votes in Supply in the month of August. It would be just as well and more honest to the people to announce that discussions on Supply are abandoned. On Supply questions arise in which the people are more keenly interested than they are in the Land Purchase Bill or the Licensing Bill, and I know of no question connected with procedure that more deserves attention than means to secure that the Government of the day—Liberal or Conservative—shall not be permitted to postpone Votes in Supply to a late period of the Session. It is perfectly within the competence of the House to frame some Standing Order by which it shall be the duty of the Government to introduce all Votes in Supply by a certain fixed date. Or, on the other hand, the subject might be approached in this way: We heard the First Lord mention the other day a suggestion, of which he now appears to have lost sight, which I am sorry for, because it seemed to me an excellent idea, not to proceed with Bills of a contentious character after 15th July.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: This is not lost sight of; that is a point to consider; but it is obvious that we do not wish to tie the Committee to consider a specific proposal. As a means of bringing the Session to an early end, this may be one of the proposals we may have to submit to the House.

MR. DILLON: I thought that was excluded?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: No.

MR. DILLON: I intended to move that such proceedings should close on the 1st of June. That would secure in another way that Supply should be brought on at a time when it could be reasonably discussed. There are two proposals: a

Standing Order might be passed binding the Government to bring on Supply by a certain date, or a Standing Order might stop legislative proceedings on June 1, leaving an interval in which we should be free to deal with Supply. Either of these proposals would meet the difficulty. Meantime, on the grounds I have urged that there are no claims of urgency to tie the Committee to this narrow reference that the Committee should be free to deal with the duration of the Session and conduct of business, and particularly this question of Supply, I move my Amendment.

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words—

"And by what means it can be secured that the consideration of Supply shall be taken before some fixed date."—(*Mr. Dillon.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

(6.20.) MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I will only interpose for a few minutes between the right hon. Gentleman and the House, because I want him to have the opportunity of saying a word or two upon the present condition of business in the House. The object of this Motion is to facilitate the earlier rising of the House for the Session, and as I think we are aware from unofficial sources to avoid having an Autumn Session. Well, I am afraid if the Resolution is passed we shall not rise earlier, and that we shall have an Autumn Session. I will ask the House to look at a figure or two and then see if this is a sufficient remedy for the *impasse* in which we find ourselves. We have now arrived at the 23rd of June, and assuming that we rise on August 17, which is not, I think, a very early date, at all events it is an average date; and assuming that the Government take, as I presume the Government will, all the Wednesdays, we shall have 38 available days to wind up the business of the Session. Now, there are on the Order Book 33 Government Bills, including the Local Taxation Bill and the Land Purchase Bill, which, I presume, we may now say are gone, and there is the Tithes Bill in a state of suspended animation. Apart from these three, there are 30 Bills to be dealt with in some manner, while my hon. Friend has called attention to the state of Supply, and Supply is the key of the position at this moment. We can only judge from analogy and the average time occupied by Supply. In 1887, excluding Supplementary Estimates, 38 days were devoted to Supply. In 1888, I think, 37 days were thus occupied; and in 1889 we got through Supply in something like 38 days. I take it within the mark when I say that 36 or 37 days have been required for Supply in the last few years. Now, we have already this year been 13 days in Supply, and therefore 24 days more are required, and when I remind the House that not an Irish Vote has been touched—and I think there are more contentious elements in the Irish Votes this year than there have been for many years—when I mention that grave questions of policy arise on the Foreign Office and Colonial Votes, and important considerations in relation to law and justice on the Votes for law and justice in the three Kingdoms, and that the Votes for the Revenue and Post Office Departments bristle with questions of difficulty, I am not predicting too much when I say they will probably occupy as much time as in previous years. Now, look at the figures: 24 days for Supply, and 14 days left for the remaining business of the Session. Well, the Government have not yet withdrawn the Bills I have mentioned. I use the word "yet," but no doubt this will happen before many days are over. Nevertheless, the stages of the journey will occupy some time. We have not heard a word of the Tithes Bill; whether it is to be gone on with or dropped; the last we heard of it was that it was to be proceeded with. Then we have the Indian Councils Bill, upon which we know there is to be an important Second Reading Debate, and there will be, probably, considerable discussion in Committee. We have on the Table a Bill of primary importance that must be dealt with—the Police Bill, which, in the interest of discipline and peace in the Metropolitan Force, cannot be postponed for another year, and I may be thought too sanguine when I say it will not get through Second Reading in less than two days. There is the Western Australia Bill must be passed; and the Bill to sanction the cession of Heligoland must provoke a good deal of discussion. You are going to have a discussion on procedure on which many questions must arise, and you have the residuum of these 30 Bills, together with the inevitable four days for the Appropriation Bill. Here is a programme to get through in 14 days. I say it is an absolute impossibility. If the First Lord would rise and say that without wasting any more time the Licensing Bill and the Tithes Bill are dead, it would still be impossible for the House to rise before the end of August; and if we are to go on with those Bills, we shall have an Autumn Session without the advantage of a summer vacation. All the evils which you endeavoured to avoid by the meeting at the Carlton Club will be developed and accentuated by the present proposal. The time has arrived when we should know what the Government mean to do in the 38 or 40 remaining days of an average Session.

(6.27.) Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): The reference to this Committee is very oddly drawn, whether by inadvertence or design I do not know. The Government propose to ask the Committee a question, the answer to which is obvious. Without reference to a Committee it is obvious that the progress of a Bill will be facilitated by carrying over its stages to an ensuing Session, and the Report of the Committee can add nothing to our information on that point. What we want to know is, if it is desirable or expedient to carry forward Bills in this manner? If the Government had dealt with it by Standing Order, we should have known how to treat it; and had the Standing Order been adopted, the right hon. Gentleman would have known how to apply it during the present Session. But how stands the matter? We have almost reached the end of June; the Committee has yet to be nominated and appointed, and then has to meet and consider not only the precedents, but the evidence that will be laid before it, after which it must report. It may determine that it is not desirable to give the facilities asked for, or that if those facilities are desirable, they should be given by Statute. In that case, would the right hon. Gentleman proceed to pass a Statute this Session, or, should they recommend that we should proceed by Standing Order, would the right hon. Gentleman propose to tackle that Standing Order now? We all know the object of the proposal. It is to enable the Government to get through the Land Purchase Bill. If the right hon. Gentleman thinks he can hang up that Bill over the present year, we certainly shall take a strong view of the question; but if he says he no longer intends to hang it up, we shall take another and a more favourable view; but it is reasonable considering the date we have now reached, and the length of time that will be taken by the Bill in Committee and in the Report stage, to take this step for the purpose of remitting the further stages of the Land Bill to another Session of Parliament. My hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo has added to the Motion a matter which, in my judgment, is more important than anything the Motion itself contains. The present proposition has reference only to one Bill, and that Bill a measure which is opposed by the great majority of the Irish Representatives. My Friend's Amendment deals with the question of Supply, and that is a matter in which we have infinitely more interest than in the proposed legislation. In fact, we have no interest in any legislation proposed by the Government, except the interest of an ardent Opposition. It has been pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet (Mr. J. Lowther), who seems to be the only man on the Ministerial side of the House who has the intelligence to perceive the point that the Government have to face, that they can have no possible legislation this Session. It is a lamentable thing that the House should be reduced to this state of things because there are two Ministers of the Crown who cannot reconcile the situation. The facilitating of business in this House rests with the Government themselves; and if they would only take ordinary care at the beginning of the Session, and bring forward no more Bills than they can pass in six months, there would be no occasion for this reference to a Committee. Of course, if they introduce enough Bills to last them two or three years, they cannot expect to pass them in a single Session. With regard to Supply, I think we have a right to complain of the action of the Government. Before the Whitsuntide Recess, I called attention to this subject, and reminded the right hon. Gentleman that the Irish Representatives never had the opportunity of calling attention to the grievances they desire to discuss. The business of Supply is the fundamental business of the House, and in that respect our functions have practically ceased. Our financial business is discharged in the most slovenly and unconstitutional manner by taking Votes on Account. The Irish Members have an ardent interest in the business of Supply, because it is only when in Supply that they have the opportunity of calling attention to the gross and scandalous misgovernment of Ireland, of which from day to day they have most bitterly to complain. We have this very evening had complaint made of the length of time occupied by the questions put upon the Paper from day to day. Why is it there are so many questions? It is mainly because we have no other means of bringing forward our grievances except when in Supply. The right hon. Gentleman promised to exert himself to secure the transaction of the business of Supply; but for the last three years he has made similar promises, and although I was at one time somewhat deceived by the imposing manner of the First Lord of the Treasury when that promise was made, I shall no longer regard his promises as worthy of attention. Unless some special steps are taken in regard to Supply, the Constitutional rights of Members of this House will not only be impaired but practically destroyed, and it is for this reason that I feel it my duty to support the Amendment of my hon. Friend.

*(6.38.) MR. W. H. SMITH: I think hon. Members opposite will feel that the appeal made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian deserves some consideration at the hands of his supporters. The right hon Gentleman stated that there is a strong desire that the House should come to a speedy conclusion on the question before it. The hon. Member for West Belfast has referred to the question of Supply, which has been raised by the hon. Member for Mayo. It has been said that it is perfectly impossible for the Committee to make any provision with regard to the period up to which Bills should be considered in this House. The Standing Order which I intended to move on the present occasion provided that—

> "In future, after the 15th of July and in the present Session after a date to be hereafter appointed, no public Bills, except Money Bills, Continuance Bills, and Bills returned from the Lords with amendments shall be further proceeded with, provided that, with respect to any public Bill which is in progress in Committee of the whole House, or in a Standing Committee, or which has been reported therefrom, a Motion can be made, after notice given, that further proceedings on such Bills be suspended until the next Session."

The Committee is free to make any recommendation with regard to the date, or to name an earlier date than the 15th of July. I believe that there exists a strong desire that the House should rise earlier in the summer, and this is my principal reason for suggesting to the House the appointment of a Committee to examine into this point, so as to provide facilities for allowing the House to do what I believe is practical and reasonable, namely, to rise at an earlier period of the summer, and at the same time to get through their business. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton has spoken of an *impasse.* No Government, however, could have contemplated that the Debates would have been carried to the length to which they have been carried; and if the argument is to be used that the Government must always look forward to continued discussion on opposed business, whatever Government may be in power, after the same fashion and manner as has characterised our proceedings this Session, then it is obvious that very small progress must be the consequence. Whether that course would be taken by hon. Gentlemen opposite if we should hereafter be in another position remains to be seen; but I am justified in saying that discussion cannot be carried on as far as it has been without practically delaying and obstructing the business of the House. The right hon. Gentleman opposite has referred to the fact that there are 33 Government Bills on the Paper; but I think that if the right hon. Gentleman would refer to the years from 1881 to 1885 he would find that there has not been less than that number of Government Bills on the Paper on the 23rd of June. Reference has also been made to the large amount of Supply yet to be got through. I am sorry that there is so much. I agree that one of our first duties is to consider Supply; but, again, I would say that we have had no reason to suppose that discussion would have been protracted in the manner in which it has been. It must not be assumed that the House is bound to rise at a given date, however much that may be desired. The first duty of the House is to transact and conclude the business which is brought before it. I trust the hon. Member for East Mayo will not press his Amendment, as it is one which the Government cannot accept, because they desire to enable the House to deal with the Report of the Committee during the present Session. The Government do not desire to withdraw from the House the consideration of the Irish Land Purchase Bill, although, no doubt, the recommendation of the Committee will admit of that Bill, with others, being dealt with under the proposed Standing Order on the ground that it is a Bill of very great importance, and one which the House ought to approach with full time for its consideration.

(6.45.) Mr. SEXTON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in the event of the Committee reporting in favour of procedure by Bill instead of by Standing Order, he intends to proceed with that Bill during the present Session?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: That would be a matter for consideration when the Report of the Committee is presented. If the Committee decides in favour of the principle involved in the reference to it I do not exclude the hope that the House may be able to give effect to that recommendation as rapidly as possible. Measures must be taken in the present Session to secure the object in view, if the House is to have the advantage of a better arrangement than is now in existence for an early adjournment next Session. I trust the House will understand that the Government desire to leave the Committee free to consider the whole question referred to them.

Mr. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I do not rise for the purpose of prolonging this discussion more than a moment or two; but I would remind the Committee that the right hon. Gentleman opposite has undoubtedly introduced controversial matter. Among the reasons he gave for making this proposal the right hon. Gentleman referred to the great length to which the discussions in this House had been protracted.

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I said the first ground for the proposal was the general desire of the House for an earlier adjournment.

Mr. J. MORLEY: That is so; but the right hon. Gentleman also referred to and made a point of what he termed practical obstruction. I do not intend to go into this; but I would point out, as a matter of fact, that the great and protracted opposition the right hon Gentleman complained of has been offered to a particular set of proposals that were not announced in the Queen's Speech, and have not received a very enthusiastic support even from the right hon. Gentleman's own friends. Has the opposition to those proposals been without effect? On the contrary, the announcement that has been made this evening as to a change of front on the part of the Government, although it is an unsatisfactory and inadequate change which the Government will yet have further to amend, affords the most perfect justification for the attitude taken by the Opposition in resisting the Compensation Clauses of the Government Bill. I am glad to hear from the right hon. Gentleman that the Select Committee is to be empowered to examine into the whole subject in all its length and breadth, and that the House is to be at liberty when the Committee reports to determine what course it would be best to adopt. The Irish Land Purchase Bill is one which, above all, ought not to be subjected to the process of suspension, because in the time that would elapse before next Session considerable alteration would have to be made in it. I agree with the hon. Member for West Belfast that Irish Supply, and especially the Irish Constabulary Vote, should be taken at an early day. Until those Estimates are discussed there will necessarily be a large number of questions put from day to day in reference to the administration of Irish affairs. The complaint made by the Irish Members as to the period at which the most important items of Irish Supply are taken is a most reasonable one; and although the right hon. Gentleman professed not to understand how it was, when a question was put as to the enormous number of questions asked in the House, and could not see the connection between that fact and the delay in taking the Irish Votes, I think, upon reflection, he is bound to see the connection. The number of Irish questions which have been overwhelming us for some days past are entirely due to the inability of the Irish

Members to discuss fully and fairly the administration of Irish affairs. These questions are, doubtless, a most inconvenient interruption of the business of the House. Although they are, under the circumstances, a necessary and inevitable interruption, we can hardly expect it will be greatly modified when the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary uses his opportunity of answering questions, as he did the other night in connection with the statement of my right hon. Friend the Member for Bridgeton (Sir G. Trevelyan), by putting into his answers matters of a very controversial character. With regard to the Amendment of the Member for East Mayo, I hope my hon. Friend will not press it; because, as my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian said at the commencement of this discussion, we shall be at liberty, when the Committee reports, to make whatever alterations in their recommendations may seem expedient. I therefore beg to ask him to withdraw his Amendment.

MR. DILLON: With the leave of the House I shall be happy to withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

(6.25.) MR. T. M. HEALY: I do not share the right hon. Gentleman's view that this Motion has been fully discussed. To my mind, no more important Resolution has ever been submitted to the House. I do not, however, wish to continue the Debate, but merely to ask the First Lord of the Treasury to answer one point that has been raised from these Benches. He says this Motion is proposed with a special view to an early adjournment, and it is exceedingly important that the Irish Members should know what representation they are to have on the Committee. I therefore ask the right hon. Gentleman to state how many Members are to compose the Committee, and how many of those Members will be Irish representatives?

(6.27.) MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I am rather in favour of the Motion of the First Lord of the Treasury. I am in favour of the carrying over system, and, therefore, think that this matter ought to be referred to a Committee. I also think that when it comes back from the Committee their recommendation ought to be carried out by Bill instead of by Resolution. I hope, however, the right hon. Gentleman will seriously consider the speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton. The right hon. Gentleman has complained that we obstruct the business of the House, and he said it was the duty of the Government to keep the House together as long as there was business to be done. I appeal to those who have been in former Governments, whether this has not always been said, and whether it has not sometimes happened that the House has been kept together until opposition has come from the Government's own supporters, rather than from their ordinary opponents, with the result that the House can no longer be kept together? The reason why there has been an exhaustive discussion of the Government measures was because there was no popular leverage behind those measures. If these Bills were really desired by the country, the country would raise such an outcry against exhaustive discussion, that exhaustive discussion would be swept away, and the Bills passed. The right hon. Gentleman probably knows that the Publicans' Compensation Bill, which he is pressing forward, is detested more on his own side of the House than on this. The other day, when the Bill was only saved by four votes, the right hon. Gentleman was in despair. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton made a very moderate estimate when, putting aside this Compensation Bill, he held it would be absolutely impossible for the House to rise before the 17th August. If this resolution is passed to carry Bills over, there will be a good deal of discussion as to what Bills are to be carried over. My hon. Friends from Ireland might not think it desirable that the Land Purchase Bill should be carried over. So that you must add to the little reckoning of my right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton the time which would be occupied in such discussions. Now, in the kindest spirit, I will give the right hon. Gentleman a little advice. It appears to me that there is no man at the head of the Government who understands the business of this House. Every Member seems to have his own way in the Cabinet. Each one is anxious to bring forward his own Bill, and none can be induced to withdraw it except in piecemeal fashion, and after looking to see whether his neighbour in the Cabinet is first going to withdraw his Bill. I am bound to say that the right hon. Gentleman and his friends are exceedingly ignorant of opinion on this side of the House. When the right hon. Gentleman made his proposal to expedite business, I presume he was under the impression that the Compensation Bill would go through in a day or two. He has awakened to the fact that that is not likely to be the case. I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it would not be better not to make half-a-dozen bites at a cherry, but frankly say, "I am human; I do not pretend to be anything more than human. I have made a mistake, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer very possibly has made a mistake, and we were in error when we brought forward this Compensation Bill after Whitsuntide." The right hon. Gentleman may throw the blame upon us, but if he will withdraw the Bill, we will give him a free hand to say what he likes with respect to us. I would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that he might allow the Committee to sit and report, but that he should not carry over any Bill to next year. Let him withdraw for the present Session his Land Purchase Bill and the Tithe Bill. I can assure him that he will not lose much by doing it. Next Session let him bring in his Bills again if he likes, and carry the Second Reading. He will have only lost four days on the Second Reading of the one and two days on the Second Reading of the other. Then next Session we could consider his very excellent plan of carrying Bills over. I implore the right hon. Gentleman to really seriously look into the question of time. Even if he withdraws this Compensation Bill at once he will have the greatest difficulty in bringing the Session to a close before the end of August, and if he continues this Compensation Bill I do really believe every single day that is spent on that Compensation Bill means a day we shall have to sit in the month of September.

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire whether by means of an abridged form of Procedure, or otherwise, the consideration of Bills, which have been partly considered in this House, could be facilitated in the next ensuing Session of the same Parliament.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LOCAL TAXATION (CUSTOMS AND EXCISE) DUTIES BILL.—(No. 244.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 2.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 5, to leave out sub-section (i.).—(*Mr. Hunter.*)

Question again proposed, "That sub-section (i.) stand part of the Clause."

(7.10.) MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): Sir, when the discussion of this Bill was postponed on Friday night, there was an expression of regret that the Scotch Superannuation Bill had not been produced. The First Lord of the Treasury stated that it would be circulated on Saturday morning or this morning. Unfortunately, the First Lord did not know that the Bill had to be read a first time, and the result is that we only got it an hour and a half ago, and until then we had not the smallest inkling of the proposal of the Government. What makes this conduct very much worse is, that when I look into the Scotch Bill, it seems to be an exact imitation of the English Bill. There was no reason in the world why this miserable copy of a miserable system of superannuation should not have been in our hands, at all events, 10 days ago. It seems to me that the action of the Government in this matter has been illiberal, and that their object has been to obtain the sanction of the Committee to a proposal without giving us the slightest notion of what that proposal is. A worse scheme of superannuation for Scotland, under the circumstances, could not have been brought forward. The English scheme is bad enough, and it has given rise to the greatest possible discontent. But in Scotland such a Bill is absurd. It divides the country among 81 Police Authorities, under some of which there are only four or five constables. It would be out of order in a discussion on a clause of the Bill before the House to enter into a criticism of the measure just introduced. But what is the position in which we are placed? We are asked to vote a sum of money towards a scheme of superannuation, which is a bad scheme. What I suggest to the Government is, that they should not press this Bill during the present Session, but should refer the question to a Select Committee. If the Government press the Bill they may lay their account that it will not pass in a short space of time. I believe it will not be satisfactory to the police or to the public of Scotland. To save time, the Government should state now and at once that they will not press this Bill, which is wrong in principle, and would be most exasperating and objectionable in practice. If the Government would refer the matter to a Select Committee, then, so far as I am concerned, I would agree to this sub-section of the Local Taxation Bill. I do not believe that by postponing the Bill the police will suffer any injury. Superannuation is a very serious matter. You have not, unfortunately, got a free hand with regard to it in England. You are bound by vested interests. We have no vested interests in Scotland; and in that country, in considering a scheme of superannuation, I think we ought to take advantage of the experience and mistakes which have been made in England, and consider the example set in that country as a precedent to be avoided. If the Government are anxious to facilitate their business, I think the best course they can pursue is to hang this Bill up and refer the matter to a Select Committee. But if they insist on proceeding with the Bill now before the Committee, without giving us an opportunity of considering the Scotch Superannuation Bill, I shall be compelled to move that you report Progress.

(7.20.) SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): On the last occasion when this Bill was before the House, the Debate was postponed in order that we might have the Superannuation Bill before us, and the Lord Advocate here. We have not had time to study the Bill, and I must say that I was very much astonished to find the Lord Advocate introduce it without vouchsafing so much as a word of explanation. But, on reflection, I am really not surprised that he did not say anything, because the Bill is nothing but a slavish copy of the English Bill, word for word. But the circumstances are not the same. In England you have got superannuation already in existence. In Scotland, we pay an officer a lump sum on his retiring. Under the circumstances, I do hope that we shall have some explanation from the Lord Advocate of the system which the Government propose to introduce. It does seem to me most regrettable that a Bill should be forced upon this House with a view to giving effect to a sub-section of the Local Taxation Bill without hon. Members having the smallest opportunity of discussing it. It is said we should not look a gift horse in the mouth, and that £40,000 is given to us. How far will that amount go, and how heavy a demand will be involved upon the rates? A very much larger sum than £40,000 may have to be taken out of the rates. Scotland is only to have £40,000, with its larger area, while London is to have £150,000 a year. The representatives of the Scotch constituencies are bound to watch this matter very closely. I do not agree with my hon. Friend. I do wish to see a scheme of superannuation.

MR. HUNTER: So do I.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I am very glad to hear it. At the same time I repeat what I said the other day, that while a system of superannuation of public servants is necessary you may carry it too far by laying down regulations which would permit of your best men retiring with pensions in the prime of life, and ready to take up other pursuits, while you would be left with only the scum and the dregs to carry on the Public Service. I am very much alarmed by the extent to which the Home Secretary yields to agitation in this matter with regard to the Metropolitan Police. I was very much astonished to hear him say that he was not going to put any check on the age at which a policeman might take his pension and retire. I think that a very dangerous thing. I want to know whether that may be done with regard to Scotland or not, with the effect that choice men, at the age of 45 or 46, may, to the injury of the Public Service, retire on their pensions, and take up other pursuits. I hope the Lord Advocate will give us a complete and satisfactory explanation of the scheme, and of the method of working the scheme.

*(7.25.) THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. M. T. STORMONTH DARLING, Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): It is not easy to satisfy the

hon. Member for Kirkcaldy. The other night he objected that the Bill to be introduced might not be similar to the English Bill. And now he objects, after he has seen it, that it is very similar. I do not know that that is a ground of objection, unless it is shown that the English Bill is not satisfactory. I hope, in a few words, to show that this Bill proceeds on reasonable and just grounds. The hon. Member for Aberdeen said that the Bill was open to a number of objections, but he did not show what they were.

Mr. HUNTER: It would have been out of order to do so.

*__Mr. M. T. STORMONTH DARLING__: Therefore, I must be excused if I confine myself to a very general outline of the proposals of the Bill. The hon. Member for Aberdeen specified one objection. He said the Bill creates 81 Police Authorities. That is not so. We are creating no Police Authorities. We are taking the Police Authorities in counties and boroughs just as we find them. Obviously it would be exceedingly inconvenient that a scheme of this kind should be administered by any but Police Authorities, who are masters of the police, and have the right to appoint and dismiss them. Therefore, I think the answer is complete, that the Police Authorities should have this subvention.

Mr. HUNTER: The objection I make is this, that you are creating separate funds in counties where there are only five constables altogether, instead of having one Superannuation Fund for the whole of Scotland. To have 81 separate Superannuation Funds would involve innumerable difficulties.

*__Mr. M. T. STORMONTH DARLING__: Would you have the whole of the police of Scotland managed by one authority?

Mr. HUNTER: No; one Superannuation Fund.

*__Mr. M. T. STORMONTH DARLING__: The proposals are these: Every constable in Scotland will, after he has completed 25 years' service, if he is of the age specified in the pension scale, be entitled to retire on his pension. If he has not completed 25 years, but 15 years, he will be entitled to his pension, provided he is permanently incapacitated. If he has not completed the full period of 15 years, and it can be shown that he is permanently incapacitated, he will be entitled, not to a pension, but to a gratuity. In the case of a man who is killed or injured, there is special provision for compensation to his family. For these purposes there is to be a Pension Fund, which will be made up, in the first place, by a stoppage out of the men's wages, the appropriation of certain fines, and the money to be voted under the Local Taxation Bill. If there is still a deficiency it must be made up from local sources. The money will be distributed in the first year according to the number of efficient members of the Police Force in each locality. In future years a system will be adopted very nearly corresponding to the actual requirements of the Force, and the distribution will be according to the amount of contribution, that is to say, every 6d. obtained from the men's pay will be met by a proportionate amount from the £40,000, and the residue will be in accordance with the actual necessities of each Police Authority, that is to say, in proportion to the actual demands made upon them. That, I should say, is a perfectly equitable system of distribution. Of course the Government have not made these proposals without inquiring as to the probable demands on the funds, and the result of this inquiry has been to show that the sum here proposed will be more than sufficient for the first few years; and the Committee must remember that, year by year, the funds will be largely increased from the other sources I have mentioned, and in particular from the contributions from the men themselves. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy seemed to draw a contrast between the sum to be allocated to Scotland and the sum to be allocated to the Metropolis, and the hon Member urged that, as the populations are about the same, the sums to be allocated to the two places ought to be about the same. But the hon. Member forgets that there are 15,000 police in the Metropolis, and only a little over 4,000 in Scotland, and that if the amounts paid were in proportion to the number of police, whilst Scotland received £40,000 the Metropolis would receive £150,000. While it is impossible for the Government to foresee whether or not there will ultimately be a demand on local resources, we have taken every means to provide such a sum as will, in the first instance, entirely meet the charge, and as it will constitute a growing fund that will very largely meet any possible claim in the future. I trust the Committee will adopt the view I ventured to urge on the last occasion when the subject was under discussion, that all we are doing is laying down the principle that Superannuation Funds are to be established, and that £40,000 is a proper sum to devote to them. These are the only two propositions to which the Committee will be committed by adopting the subsection. I have not heard from the other side any rooted objection in principle to the creation of a Superannuation Fund. All the Committee have to do now is to say whether they are, or are not, in favour of such a plan, and whether they are, or are not, in favour of the allocation of this money to this particular purpose. There were expressions of opinion on the Front Opposition Bench, on Thursday night, very strongly in favour of the creation of a pension; therefore, I apprehend that all we have to say now is whether or not we favour such a fund. I hope the answer to the whole of this question will be in the affirmative.

(7.35.) MR. HUNTER: The hon, and learned Gentleman has not answered any of the questions which I put to him, and on the answer he gives will depend whether I move to report Progress or not.

*MR. CHILDERS: This is not a question which ought to be disposed of lightly. Police superannuation is quite a different matter from superannuation in most Departments of the Public Service. For instance, there are large bodies of men connected with the dockyards and arsenals, and connected with the Revenue Department and the Customs in England, in whose benefit a system of superannuation has been established, whereby the men, when falling ill or reaching the age of 60, receive a proportion of their salary, calculated on the number of years of service. Here we have a very simple system, which has gained ground ever since it has been established, and which now applies to the mass of the public servants of this country. But the police are avowedly a very different body to those I have enumerated. You cannot apply the same rules to the superannuation of the police that you can apply to ordinary public servants. The conditions of their service are far more exhausting, and you cannot postpone their superannuation until they reach the age of 60 years. You cannot superannuate the police on the same terms as you superannuate the soldiers and sailors, who have a comparatively short service. The whole question of the superannuation of the police is, therefore, extremely difficult, and I must say I entirely disagree with the hon. and learned Gentleman when he asks the Committee in a light and airy way, to vote the money first and to decide how it is to be applied afterwards. The Committee ought first to know on what principle we are going to carry out the system, and then it will be time to decide how much shall be contributed from public funds, and how much from other funds—that is to say, from the contribution of the men themselves. The hon. and learned Gentleman is beginning at the wrong end. He ought to have laid down a system before saying in an airy way that £40,000 or £50,000, or any other sum, should be allocated for this purpose. This question is of great importance. I am not one of those who think it a light matter, and I differ from the hon. and learned Gentleman, because I think it is desirable to lay down something like a common system for the superannuation of the police of the whole of Scotland before deciding as to the amount to be allocated to the purpose. In England we have already systems of superannuation in above 100 counties and boroughs. Excepting in Greenock, there are no Superannuation Funds existing in Scotland other than of the most imperfect character; therefore, in dealing with Scotland, an opportunity arises for laying down a sound system *ab initio.* It is also, I think, very questionable whether every Local Authority should have its own independent Superannuation Fund; it would be best to follow the system of superannuation in the Civil Service, where the fund is administered by one Central Authority for the Service in all its Departments. If the Scotch Police Fund were administered by some representative police authority it would, I think, be found not only more economical, but more advantageous to the men themselves. The men would feel that they were all treated alike, and not according to the arbitrary view of a petty Local Authority having control over 10 or a dozen men, and consequently influenced often too much by the circumstances of every man. It would be agreeable to the men themselves to know that they had a thoroughly impartial authority to administer the superannuation. To my mind, it would be well not to carry the Debate on these words further, but to let the whole matter be considered by a Select Committee. Such an inquiry would not occupy more than 10 days or a fortnight, and after it we should be able to approach the question much more satisfactorily.

(7.45.) THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman expects that the Government could put the cart before the horse in the manner he suggests. What the Government now propose to do with regard to Scotland is what we have already done with regard to England. We have voted the money for England, and the Bill proposes to put Scotland in the same position as England. I should not care for the reproaches that would be levelled at the Government by the Scotch people if, the money having been voted for England, we refused to vote the money for Scotland. I presume there is some object in wishing to put off the Bill. Presumably, the right hon. Gentleman thinks that if the superannuation we propose is not satisfactory, it would be well to drop it and not use the money for that purpose at all.

*MR. CHILDERS: My view is exactly the reverse. I think it is most important that this superannuation question should be dealt with this Session, and it is for that reason that I make the proposal.

MR. GOSCHEN: Then I would advise the right hon. Gentleman to secure the money. But I do not see why the right hon. Gentleman should wish to postpone voting the money for the present, unless it is that he considers it possible that the money may not be wanted at all. For my own part, I scout the suggestion of such a possibility. Scotland must need the money, whatever differences there may be amongst Scotch Members as to the form of superannuation to be adopted. One word with regard to the extraordinary plan propounded by my right hon. Friend. My right hon. Friend proposes a superannuation scheme for the whole of Scotland—a superannuation scheme subsidised by this money which we are proposing to give, but which must, ultimately, depend upon the rates. He suggests that in Scotland we should have a Superannuation Fund managed by the State, and that the localities should have no control over it, and that any deficiencies there might be should be made up out of the local rates. Well, I think when my right hon. Friend considers the tendency of Local Bodies in Scotland, like Local Bodies elsewhere, to have a very decisive voice as regards local finance, he will see that to propose such a scheme for Scotland would be to insnre its rejection at once. Any scheme for Scotland placing the fund for the superannuation of the police in the hands of the State, while the local rates are to make good deficiencies, will not be acceptable to the Local Authorities in Scotland. Such a scheme, moreover, would, necessarily, be of a cast-iron nature, whereas it is obvious that a different scale of pensions ought to apply to the rural districts than to the large towns, where the police are worked very much harder, and where, therefore, they are entitled to higher pensions. Are the Local Authorities to determine the rates of pensions, or are they to be left to the decision of an Imperial Authority? That is the question I put in the best spirit before hon. Gentlemen opposite, and I am quite certain that whatever scheme of superannuation may be adopted, that which the right hon. Gentleman has proposed would not be just, and would not commend itself to the people of Scotland. You could not impose a new burden on the rates without giving the localities control over the scale of pensions. I would urge that against the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, but the main point is whether this money should be given to Scotland. I would advise the Scotch Members to take the money, and, then, whatever form of superannuation is established, they will find it an advantage to have this endowment from the State.

*(7.50.) DR. CAMERON: I would point out that much time would have been saved if Scotch Members had had the information on Thursday night which is vouchsafed now. It is said that the principle of the proposal is to base superannuation in Scotland on precisely the same principle as that in England, and when last the subject was under discus-

sion I rose to point out that it was quite impossible for the scheme proposed in England to be workable in the case of Scotland. On referring to the English Bill I find it is proposed to give a grant from the Imperial Exchequer, proportionate to the amount of the deductions made from the pay of the police, for superannuation allowances. I now find that it is proposed to distribute the grant in Scotland in proportion to the number of men maintained. I should like to know whether the wish of the Scotch police has ever been ascertained on the subject? Do they know it is proposed to impose upon them a fine of 2½ per cent., to be deducted from their pay, for the purpose of superannuation? I do not think they do. Do the Government intend, after having started a system of superannuation in Scotland on the principle of distribution according to the number of men maintained, to adopt subsequently the English proposal——

THE CHAIRMAN: It is out of order to enter into a discussion of the proposals of the Police Bill. The simple question is whether £40,000 shall be allocated.

*DR. CAMERON: Exactly, Sir; and I think it will be most germane to that question to inquire how far the £40,000 will go. As far as the principle of police superannuation is concerned, I am in favour of it, but we should know the feeling of the Police Authorities, and the ratepayers who are to be called upon to make good deficiencies should know what amount of deficiency they are likely to be called upon to make good. We have no information on these two most important points. It is proposed that we should have a Committee on the subject. I do not think that is asking too much. The right hon. Gentleman has told us that the amount proposed to be allocated is more than sufficient to carry out the scheme. I do not think it will be at all adequate. The heaviest demands will be made at the commencement. Every constable of 25 years' service when the Bill becomes law, will be entitled to his pension. I doubt very much whether the police throughout Scotland know it is proposed to take their pay in order to provide them with superannuation allowances, and I doubt whether they are prepared to submit to the deductions without at once demanding an equivalent increase of pay. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer said we had better take the money when we can get it. I quite agree with him on that point, and I agree with him all the more when I remember that the right hon. Gentleman got the money for the English superannuation scheme, to a large extent, by a perfectly unjust and unprecedented taxation of the national drink in Scotland. The Government might logically hang up this £40,000 by adding words to the effect that the money should be applied

> "For such purposes of police superannuation in Scotland as shall be provided for in any Act that may be subsequently passed by Parliament."

This proposal would enable the question to be considered without unduly rushing a Bill of this magnitude through the House. I trust, at any rate, the Government will be able to give us some assurance as to the adequacy of the sum proposed to be given to Scotland, and that they will further assure us they have explained to the rank and file of the police that they will have to provide the most substantial contribution to the fund.

(8.1.) MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): The argument used by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that money ought to be voted for England, and therefore ought to be voted for Scotland, and that we had better take the money now that we have the chance, ought not to be passed by without notice. This is a question which has been frequently under consideration during the last seven or eight years. I earnestly press on the Government to give an answer to the question put by my hon. Friend the Member for the College Division of Glasgow, namely, whether any steps have been taken to ascertain whether their proposals will be acceptable to the great body of the police, and also to the large Municipalities in Scotland. Personally, I do not think their proposals can be very widely known, and that is certainly a reason why we should not come to a hasty decision. It is important we should know how the Local Authorities, particularly the County Councils, will look at this scheme. During the last seven or eight years there has been a considerable alteration in the view entertained by

Local Bodies as to police superannuation, and therefore the Government must not consider, that because they are practically re-introducing an old Bill, they have the full support of the majority of the inhabitants of Scotland. The Local Authorities will not be in possession of the Government's proposals until Wednesday morning, and it is hardly likely they will be able to come to a decision with regard to them forthwith. I trust that ample time will be allowed for the consideration of this matter by those chiefly interested.

(8.10.) MR. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright): I can hardly think hon. Gentlemen opposite are serious in their opposition to this section, nor can I understand that the people of Scotland will not be thoroughly satisfied with this Bill. If the hon. Gentlemen who are raising obstacles to the passing of this measure feel that they require more time, no doubt they will have ample opportunity of considering the question in all its bearings when the Police Bill is before the House. But to suppose that the Scotch Police are not as anxious to be put in the same favourable position as the police in England is a great mistake. I am satisfied the Local Authorities will think this measure a very good one, and, therefore, I hope hon. Gentlemen will not any longer resist the passing of the clause.

(8.15.) MR. DUFF (Banffshire): I approve of superannuation, but I certainly think that the sum proposed, which is to go on accumulating, is very large, especially when there are various other objects in Scotland to which the money could be applied. At the same time, while desiring further information, I am far from being opposed or antagonistic in any way to a proper and well-considered scheme of police superannuation.

(8.16.) SIR G. CAMPBELL: It seems to me that when the Chancellor of the Exchequer told us we had better take this money when we could get it, he forgot we have got it already. We have got it under the Inland Revenue Bill, and now we are considering how it is to be distributed. I think the superannuation of the police is a desirable object; but the question is, whether £40,000 which is proposed to be given, is a right sum to give for that object. In regard to that question, I have not heard a word from hon. Gentlemen opposite. The Lord Advocate seems determined by his silence to justify the suggestion that he was not wanted here and that we have brought him up from Scotland for nothing. I have no doubt that the Solicitor General for Scotland gave us the best answer he could under the instruction he had, but he did not say why the Government fixed upon this particular sum. I did think we should have had some actuarial calculation, but we have had nothing of the kind. The Solicitor General believes that for some years there will be a great deal more money than is required. Is it desirable to bottle up this money for purposes which, perhaps, may never arise, when there are extremely pressing necessities in Scotland for more money? We are just short of getting free education; we want something added to what we have not got to complete the matter. Indeed, there are many subjects to which this money could be applied, and, therefore, I think we ought to be told what are the reasons under which they ask the House to give this particular sum for this particular purpose.

(8.20.) MR. LYELL (Orkney and Shetland): As representing Orkney and Shetland, I object entirely to this proposal. My constituency will not receive a single penny of this money, and I am not aware that the Government are going to refuse the increased duty from spirits and beer which my constituents will have to pay. The superannuation grant is only to be given on the certificate of the Secretary for Scotland, and only when the Secretary for Scotland obtains a certificate from an Inspector of police as to the efficiency of the local force. The Police Force of Orkney and Shetland have remained entirely independent of the Central Authority, and receive no portion of the grant for the pay and clothing of the police. They have maintained their independence, and I think it very unfair that the people of Orkney and Shetland should be forced to contribute towards this large sum of money, and obtain nothing in return for it, in the way of grant for police superannuation, that I can see.

(8.23.) THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Bute): The question as to how much money will be required is one which, owing to the nature of the condition, requires to be answered guardedly, because, if we take the question of how much money will be required at once, it is obvious that that is a partial and one-sided view. We have to deal with a case where the number of pensioners will continue to increase for a number of years to come.

MR. HUNTER: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to put the matter a little clearer. I asked whether the Bill is intended to apply to those now in the Force and eligible, but who have contributed nothing, or only to those who may come into the Force.

MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: It is proposed to let the men who are now superannuated receive benefit at once. It has been asked whether the assent of the police has been obtained for this scheme. If that means whether a *plébiscite* has been taken, certainly not. But there is one reason why there can be no objection to the passing of the scheme so far as individual interests are concerned, and that is that there is a clause expressly providing that if anyone dislikes the terms, he may remain outside the scheme, and that without prejudice to his position. As to whether £40,000 will be required at once, I will point out that, assuming 300 men were to retire at once, and that each was allowed £50, the amount required at once would be £15,000. We have looked into this matter very carefully, and we have found that as we go on the amount demanded will rise up to so large a sum that it will exceed immensely the sum of £40,000; and, therefore, it will be fallacious to treat this question as one which can be answered absolutely. We must deal with it in a sensible way, and there is every reason to believe that a grant of £40,000 will not entail an inordinate claim on the ratepayers, because we shall have the 2½ per cent., which will amount to £7,500 a year, and other contributions will amount to a considerable sum. The residue necessary to be found will, of course, fall upon the ratepayers. This scheme is, as every superannuation scheme must be, one in which it is desirable that the Imperial contribution shall be but a contribution, and not a sum which will carry the whole burden. Further, it is desirable that there shall be some stimulus to the savings of the men, and that they shall have an interest in the fund to which they are contributories. I have frankly stated the financial aspect of the question, and all I can say is that this is a reasonable and adequate contribution in order to put the scheme upon a fair footing. I do not wish to throw at hon. Gentlemen the taunt or suggestion that they are opposed to the superannuation of the police, but they can best get rid of any doubt on that point by proceeding to accept this clause, which does not go into any of the details. The Government do not propose a Select Committee to deal with this matter, but it may be sent to a Grand Committee, where it can have a business-like discussion. (8.30.)

(9.2.) Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present.

(9.5.) MR. HUNTER: There was one statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on which I should like to say a word. The right hon. Gentleman objected that if this scheme is rejected the ultimate liability will be cast on the ratepayers. It is true that the Bill provides for an ultimate liability, but I doubt very much whether that proposal can be sustained. It certainly will receive a most vigorous opposition from this side of the House in the absence of the exact calculations with which the Government ought to furnish the Committee. I would compare the use of that argument with the assertion sometimes made in support of the solvency of a Friendly Society in the words, "If we cannot pay our way, we can make a levy." I regret very much that the Lord Advocate indicated the opinion on the part of the Government that the Superannuation Bill should be referred to the Grand Committee on Law. The question of superannuation ought not to be referred to the Grand Committee, because that Committee cannot hear witnesses. The matter should go to a Select Committee, because the Committee will require the evidence of actuarial experts, for it is evident that at the present moment the Government are entirely in the dark as to the financial position of their scheme. How utterly erroneous their view is, the Government have shown in one part of their Bill. One clause says the contribution from the £40,000 should be equal to the weekly payments of the men, but as the deductions from the men are to be at the rate of 2½ per cent., which would yield only £7,300, the £40,000 would be 5½ times the contribution from the Force, equivalent to an increase in wages of 2s. 9d. in the £1, which would be an enormous increase in the amount available for the Police Force. I mention that, not because I object to the increase, large as it would be, but because I think that, if the Government were really to go into the question, they would find that sum would enable them to give far larger benefits to the police than they have under the Superannuation Bill. Take, for example, the total amount required to superannuate the existing officers. The proposal to give two-thirds of the actual pay a constable is enjoying would require a certain sum of money. The Lord Advocate did not tell us how much the superannuation of the police would cost, but I have made a calculation based on the minimum figure in regard to age. Putting down pensions for officers at £60 and men at £50, I estimate that the sum required is £18,840. The other proposals in the Bill are quite insufficient to bring the sum up to £30,000. Yet it is obvious that the grant supplemented by the contribution of the men and by money derived from other sources must be considerably in excess of £50,000. The total cost of the police in Scotland is only £292,000, and a sixth part of that sum would make a very heavy Pension List. These are points on which I think we should have some information. I do not bring this forward for the purpose of pressing the Lord Advocate for an answer, but I do it for the purpose of impressing on him the importance of referring the matter to a Select Committee in order to obtain some actuarial evidence. According to the Rules of Debate, I may not discuss the provisions of the Bill, but I believe I shall be in order in saying what would be the kind of superannuation for which I would gladly vote. I should desire that a superannuation should be based on the idea of an Insurance and Provident Fund, and on which the contributions of the men themselves should form a most material circumstance, both in determining the time at which they should receive the pensions and the amount they should be paid. I would say, not only that a certain age should entitle a man to a pension, but that he ought to be entitled to a pension if he is permanently disabled from any cause, whether previous to that age or not, and provision should be made for the children of any man who is killed until the youngest is 15 years of age. Provisions of that kind may be found in the Bill, but I would make the measure more extensive. If we take this Bill before an ordinary Select Committee, it may be that we shall hear enough to satisfy us that a larger object would be obtained by this sum of money. The Lord Advocate may take a different view, and, therefore, it is most important that we should have this Committee before which evidence can be given decisively one way or the other. I believe that with this £40,000 a great deal more than is proposed by the Government ought to be accomplished in the way of police superannuation. And before I sit down I should like to say that whatever pension is paid ought to be paid as a right and not as a favour. Is it to be paid as a favour? ["No, no!"] I infer from the right hon. Gentleman's denial that he will be willing to strike out that portion of the Bill, and I will put down Amendments for that purpose. Then, the pension should be absolutely irrevocable. To say that a certain amount of money is due to a man as a legal debt, and then to say that if he does something or other it will be taken away, is inconsistent with the theory of insurance and thoroughly objectionable. I think a considerable part of the fund should be found from the contributions of the men. As matters now stand, the contributions of the men cannot be more than one-seventh of the whole—that is to say, six-sevenths are to be contributed by the State and one-seventh by the men. I am not sure that a larger sum should not be contributed by the men. It would be a most satisfactory way of dealing with the question for the Government to give us some information as to the persons they have consulted and the information they have received as the basis of their calculation, or for them to put before us in the form of a Paper the practical scheme they intend to work out. When I rose at an earlier portion of the evening to ask the Lord Advocate to appoint a Select Committee, and said if his answer was not satisfactory I should move to report Progress, I was actuated entirely by a desire to enable the Government to get through with this question. We heard nothing about that question until the very last moment, when the

Lord Advocate interposed. I am sure hon. Members will agree with me that the details of this question can be better discussed in a Select Committee than in Committee of the whole House. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this question. We have now an opportunity of starting a system financially sound from the beginning and bound to be sound all through. I am sure that the proceedings before a Select Committee will be at least as short as proceedings before this House would be, and I believe the results obtained would be much more satisfactory. Personally, I am favourable to a scheme of superannuation, and I am only anxious to render the Government every assistance in my power in obtaining as good a scheme as possible.

*(9.22.) Mr. LENG (Dundee): I wish to state a further reason why the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee rather than to the Grand Committee on Law——

The CHAIRMAN: I must point out that the Motion before the Committee refers to the allocation of £40,000 to the Superannuation Fund, and any question as to the desirability of referring the Bill to a Select Committee or a Grand Committee, except in strict connection with that, is quite irrelevant.

*(9.23.) Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling, &c.): I anticipate with some degree of certainty that it may be imputed to my hon. Friends that they are spinning out the Debate for some ulterior reason, but I can assure the Government that they had no such idea. If they had such an idea it would be a very foolish one, because the next subsection provides ample opportunity for Debate. The question before the Committee is a serious one, and my hon. Friends have treated it with considerable forbearance. My hon. Friend would have been justified in moving to report Progress, because we have, until this afternoon, received no information as to the mode in which the money is to be expended, and the Bill introduced this evening reached the hands of hon. Members too late to be studied before discussing the sub-section before the Committee. The question of police superannuation is entirely new in Scotland. We have a blank sheet of paper on which to write, and it is, therefore, all the more necessary that Scottish opinion should be thoroughly informed on the subject. I am not sure

that in every part of Scotland there is a burning desire to have any system of superannuation. Scotch Members, however, wish to know upon what *data* the Government arrive at the sum of £40,000. I will tell the Committee why I think they ask for £40,000. When the Government made up their minds to impose the tax on spirits, they had an object to serve in England; but when they came to Scotland, they found themselves with the money in hand, and had to look about for some object to which they might apply it. That is the cart before the horse with a vengeance. My idea of finance is that you should, first of all, find the object for which you wish to expend the money, and then lay on the taxes to meet the expenditure. If my supposition is not correct, let us have from the President of the Local Government Board some little information as to the *data* on which this sum is based. The figures quoted to-night on this side of the House would seem to imply that this is a grossly exaggerated sum. I have already said that I do not look with much favour on the policy of Police Superannuation. That is my personal, academic, and pious opinion. But if this thing is to be done at all, we, at least, do not want to vote a larger sum of money than is necessary. We further want to know what reason there is to suppose that this money is needed. The Chancellor of the Exchequer adopted a tone on this subject which I, as a Scotchman, do not much admire. He looked rather knowingly, and he said to us, "Surely Scotch Members won't refuse this money when it is offered to them; they will take it, and then, afterwards, they will see how it is to be applied under the Police Bill." That is the old Cockney view of the Scotchman—that he is a greedy fellow, anxious to take money from whatever source he can get it. I do not accept that character of my countrymen. They are a frugal people, who do not wish to see their own money mis-spent, and who do not wish to see the money of other people mis-spent. We are entitled to ask for more information than we have yet received. We were told the other night that we had no reason to complain, because this was the way in which the English Bill was dealt with—that the sum of money was voted before the Bill was introduced. If that bad example was set and protested against at the time, there was all the more reason for avoiding it on this occasion. Then we were told that the Bill was a very simple matter, because it followed the English precedent. If that were so, it was the more easy to produce the Scotch Bill earlier. On every ground we have reason to complain that we have received so little accurate information on the subject from Her Majesty's Government. So far from making any unreasonable demand upon the Government, the Scotch Members have been most forbearing in not interposing a Motion for the Adjournment on the ground that we have not in our possession that which I feel perfectly certain—if there is a real foundation for this scheme—the Government will give us in a moment, namely, the positive *data* upon which this sum of £40,000 has been arrived at, and in what proportion the sum which is to superannuate the police is to be derived from its different sources.

*(9.5.) THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I regret I was not here during the earlier part of the right hon. Gentleman's observations, but I think I can give a general answer to his question. I believe the tendency of his remarks and those of other hon. Members from Scotland is that £40,000 is too much. I would point out that actuarial calculations are the most difficult and impossible to present with accuracy; but from the information I have, I believe myself that the sum of £40,000 in a few years will not represent much more than one-third of the police superannuation.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: For Scotland?

*MR. MATTHEWS: Yes; I can only give the right hon. Gentleman general figures on the subject. And I take the Police Force of London, in which the police superannuation is less excessive and liberal than is provided for in this Bill. It was in 1862 that the extravagant and excessive scale of superannuation was brought under notice by Sir George Grey, and it was then reduced to the present scale. The present expenditure on the 15,000 members of the Metropolitan Police is £202,591 a year, and I am told by actuaries that we are likely to have that amount doubled, and that, ultimately, the charge will be more than £400,000. I agree that the analogy I have given is rather a rough one, but it is almost impossible to give a correct actuarial result. If the right hon. Gentleman will take the trouble to turn to the proceedings of the Committee in 1877, he will find that they waited for two years until Dr. Farr got out of the police books the *data* on which were based certain Resolutions laid before the Committee. I am sorry to say, after all the elaborate research, the greater part of Dr. Farr's conclusions were mistaken. The number of pensioners in the Metropolitan Force turned out to be double what he estimated.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Can the right hon. Gentleman give any reason why the actuarial calculations of the amount of pensions should be so much more difficult in the case of the Police Force than in the case of the Army and Navy and the Civil Service?

*MR. MATTHEWS: I will not enter upon the question of the Army and Navy. I have not considered these two Forces. I have told the right hon. Gentleman of the difficulty in the case of the Police Force. Observe that from 15 years to 25 years, if a man is disabled from duty, he is entitled to a pension. That disablement depends on a thousand and one contingencies. I daresay, if you took 300,000 policemen, you might be able to get an average which would afford a basis for probable calculations. But you cannot get anything like that number to enable you to estimate the number of pensioners. Dr. Farr calculated the number of pensioners at 14 to the 100; but the result has shown that 38, instead of 14, is the actual number taken out. We have consulted the best opinion we could get, and the Actuary (Mr. Finlaison), who was consulted also by my right hon. Friend (the Lord Advocate), informs me that the amount of superannuation may be expected to go up from £202,591 to £550,000. Seeing that we are giving to Scotland with 4,000 police £40,000, the right hon. Gentleman will see that, approximately, the proportion is the same as £150,000 for the Metropolis. I really have not the information with regard to Scotland. We want to know, for instance, how many of the Scotch Police have taken service for 25 years, and would come out under the Bill at once.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): 370.

*MR. MATTHEWS: I have not been able to obtain that figure, and I have very grave doubts as to its accuracy. However, it really does not matter for the purpose of my argument. You have to ascertain the number who have served 15 years, and the number likely to be disabled by sickness or accident. Possibly, for the first three or four years the £40,000 will be too much, though I do not think that will be found to be the case. But should it turn out so, then Clause 22 of the Police Bill provides that part of the accumulations may be devoted to other local purposes. But I own, myself, that I do not think that £40,000 in Scotland will be too much, even if the funds are allowed to accumulate.

(9.45.) MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): The speech just made by the right hon. Gentleman is the most important speech that has yet been made during the Debates on this Bill, because it alters the whole situation of the case both as regards England and Scotland, for the right hon. Gentleman has told us, but without producing the Papers on which his calculation rests—Papers which the House ought to have if they are in existence—that which must be appalling both to County and Borough Members, and which will necessitate a re-consideration of the whole position. The entire amount now paid in pensions is £371,000, and the Home Secretary has told us we must count upon that sum being at least doubled, so that it will amount to between £700,000 and £800,000. The result will be that, instead of the counties and boroughs deriving an expected advantage from the £150,000 a year, which is to be given under the Bill, they will have to pay an enormous amount in addition to what they already contribute. I think the Government will find that the boroughs and counties of England will have a good deal to say before they sanction a system of police superannuation which will involve such a vast increase of expenditure. We have some figures—not the right hon. Gentleman's actuarial calculations, which are hidden somewhere among the archives of the Home Office —on which we can go. I allude to the Returns furnished by the Under Secretary. From these the House can form some opinion as to how the Police Fund is working, and how this proposal will affect the Scotch people. There are 4,100 policemen in Scotland. Now, let me take one or two typical cases in England, where I know in one case, and I believe in the other, the Superannuation Fund is administered efficiently, liberally, and well. In Liverpool the Police Force is as nearly as possible one-third that of Scotland, namely, Liverpool has 1,346 policemen, against 4,100 in Scotland; the entire amount paid in pensions in Liverpool is £1,700 a year, upon which basis the amount required for Scotland would be £23,000 a year. Then I take the County of Staffordshire. The Police Fund there is divided among three counties, rated by three separate rates, there being a town police, a patrol police, and a rural police. Staffordshire has a large accumulated fund, which is not only in a position of perfect solvency, but out of which the men are most liberally dealt with. There are nearly 600 policemen in Staffordshire, the number being 581, and the sum paid in pensions is £3,500 a year. On that basis the amount required for Scotland would be £24,000 a year. If you go between those two figures, namely, £24,000 and £33,000, it would seem impossible to spend anything like £50,000 a year in police pensions in Scotland.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): £40,000 a year.

*(9.50.) MR. H. H. FOWLER: The contribution of the Government is to be £40,000 a year; but, taking the deductions from the men's pay at 2½ per cent. there will be an extra amount of £10,000, which will make the total £50,000. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has indignantly denounced the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) that he should make a common fund; in which case, I believe, there would be no burden on the Scotch rates at all; but whether this be so or not, it is evident that £40,000 a year would be enormously in excess of the requirements of Scotland. Such an expenditure is unknown either in the Civil Service or in the Army and Navy, and would be an intolerable burden upon the country. This proposal very strongly confirms my determination to resist this measure.

*(9.52.) MR. RITCHIE: The Home Secretary has pointed out that the actuarial calculations on this matter are not

altogether reliable, while some of them have been shown to be incorrect. As I understand, however, there seems to be a general opinion in the House that the matter requires further investigation. [An hon. MEMBER: A Select Committee.] There can be no doubt, after the various statements that have been made, that there is considerable room for difference of opinion on the question, and I understand that the desire for a Select Committee is not accompanied by any wish to delay the application of the principle of superannuation or to throw any difficulty in the way of settling the question. Under those circumstances, the Government, anxious to meet the wishes of the House that the subject shall be fully investigated, and believing that this course will be generally approved, will consent to the suggestion as to the appointment of a Committee.

(9.54.) MR. STOREY (Sunderland): If this were a purely Scotch quarrel I should not have entered into it; but as several English Members have taken part in the Debate, perhaps I, as representing a constituency near the Scottish border, may be allowed to offer a few remarks. Although what I am about to say may be regarded as a voice crying in the wilderness, I cannot but think that the whole system under which the Government propose to superannuate the police is utterly wrong. I cannot see why the police should be treated better in Scotland than the soldiers who fight for their country, and I entirely object to an arrangement under which the servants of one Department of the State are allowed the benefit of this superannuation process. I warn the Government to look to this matter. The Socialistic claim is that all men should be pensioned by the State at a certain age, and this will receive strong support from this attempt to superannuate the Scotch Police. At the present moment we are paying a sum amounting altogether to between £6,000,000 and £7,000,000 for what I may call dead men; that is, men who are dead so far as the service of the State is concerned; and now it is proposed that this system shall be extended to the police throughout the country. I am astonished to find that the President of the Local Government Board should, of all men, be the Minister to propose a measure like this, because two years ago, when he brought forward his Local Government Bill, many on those Benches applauded his statement that the ancient rotten system of subvention by the Central Authority to the Local Authority was to be done away with; that the ancient system of centralisation was to be put an end to; and that in future not only the old Local Authorities, but the new Authorities, who are his own children, should have to deal only with their own burdens.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. Member that he is travelling somewhat wide of the question.

MR. STOREY: I am only arguing that it is wrong to spend this £40,000 for police superannuation in Scotland, and was illustrating my argument by the fact that the right hon. Gentleman is re-introducing the very system he professed to destroy two years ago. Who is to arrange it? Are the Municipalities in Scotland to do as they please; are the County Authorities to make what arrangement they choose? Not so. The Home Secretary comes here and resuscitates that old-fashioned and condemned method of using the central power to control the local power. The Government propose the form in which the Local Authority should give this superannuation, but they go a step further in the very bad system. Under the old system we in Berwickshire could get rid of the control of the right hon. Gentleman at any time by refusing the half grant. But what is the case now? The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board gives us the money, and, at the same time, introduces a Bill which will become an Act, which will be binding on all the Local Authorities in Scotland. Therefore, in this system of police superannuation, the right hon. Gentleman is re-introducing in a baser form the very vice of control by the Central Authority which he put an end to two years ago. I, in common with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, have been concerned to hear what cost all this is to involve the Municipalities in. In our own borough the County Council will, I believe, reject the Bill; but the police have already done so, and they have done so because they decline utterly to have this cast-iron rule laid down for them by the Central Authority in London—to have it arranged by a Government which does not understand at all the circumstances of the various localities. I dare say the Home Secretary is quite right. He says he has done his best to understand the Police Superannuation Bill for London, but, to judge from his attitude to-night, I do not think he understands it. But even if he did understand the necessities of London, that would not justify the House in believing that he understands very much about the northern counties. Local circumstances differ, and local needs differ, and for the House of Commons to permit the Government to lay down a cast-iron rule without regard to special circumstances seems not only to return to an evil state of things, but is also a very bad thing in itself. Therefore, I shall oppose the proposal. I do not believe the Committee will be doing wisely in face of the important social questions that are being raised, and will be raised, throughout this and other countries, to carry this system of superannuation, not merely to military persons and servants serving in our public offices, but still further to persons serving under our Local Authorities. The view of the people of the North, at any rate, is that you should pay a man—whether he be a Cabinet Minister, or an officer of the Army, or a Civil servant, or a policeman—as all workmen are paid: give him good wages, so as to enable him to provide for old age by contributing to some Benefit Society. That I claim to be the manly plan, and I object to the principle by which we apply this system of superannuation to one set of public servants after another. I object to it unless the Government will go the whole length of their principles, like the Emperor of Germany, and bring in a Bill to provide for the superannuation of all people in every rank and grade of society when they are no longer able to support themselves. I warn the Government that, even after the Bill has passed the ordeal of a Select Committee, there will still remain men in the House compelled to resist the measure because it restores the evil principle of centralisation, and because it applies a principle to policemen which ought not to be so applied unless the Government are prepared to extend its operations very much further.

*(10.8.) MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) rose to continue the discussion.

(10.8.) Mr. MARK STEWART rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but the CHAIRMAN withheld his assent, and declined then to put that question.

*(10.9.) MR. ESSLEMONT: I think the prohibitory Motion which the hon. Member (Mr. Mark Stewart) has put, will not do much to further the interests of police superannuation in Scotland. As a Scotch Member who has believed for many years that a *primâ facie* case has been made out for superannuation, I think the proposal of the President of the Local Government Board, to refer the Police Superannuation (Scotland) Bill to a Select Committee, is, in many respects, satisfactory. We have only late this afternoon received the Bill, which contains a great many intricate clauses and startling proposals, and it is but reasonable that time should be given to fully consider the nature of these proposals. I can assure the Government that the proposal that a policeman earning 24s. a week should, at the age of 46, receive for the remainder of his life 16s. a week, is one which it will be very difficult to induce men who at no period of their lives can earn more than 16s. a week to agree to. Although I think there is a strong case made out on behalf of those who have been hurt in the execution of their duties as policemen, and the families of those who may be killed while discharging their duties as policemen, I think it is most desirable that the Police Bill should not be in any way rushed through Committee, but that ample time should be given to consider the measure, both in the interest of the police and the ratepayers.

(10.12.) MR. HUNTER: I beg leave to withdraw the Amendment, the Government having so handsomely made the concession that I asked for at seven o'clock. I would merely point out that, if the Government had conceded the point when I raised the question, we should have been saved this three hours' discussion. The right hon. Gentleman did not appear to be aware that £40,000 is 15·7 per cent. of the whole sum spent on the police in Scotland.

(10.13.) SIR G. CAMPBELL: As to the alarming statement of the Home Secretary, I think it would have been better if the Government had made arrangements to reconcile the statements of its several

Members. The Solicitor General for Scotland tells us that this money is more than enough, but the right hon. Gentleman opposite says it is three times as much as will be wanted. I think the Home Secretary is entering on a mad career of excessive and extravagant superannuation which will do more harm than good.

(10.14.) Sir G. TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): Am I correct in thinking that we have now done Sub-section 1? ["No, no."]

Mr. ANGUS SUTHERLAND (Sutherland): I have no objection to the superannuation of the police, but I should like to know who asks for this scheme of superannuation for Scotland. I have frequently in this House pressed the claims of a part of Scotland in which I am particularly interested, but the Government have persistently refused to do anything for it. Yet they introduce this huge scheme for the superannuation of the police without having, so far as I am aware, having ever been asked for it.

(10.16.) Dr. CLARK (Caithness): Let us understand where we are before we divide. I understand the Bill is to come before a Select Committee, and that before the Select Committee reports we are to decide whether we are going to spend £40,000, or £20,000, or £5,000, or perhaps nothing for this purpose. We will not allow the Amendment to be withdrawn, as we are some of us altogether opposed to the clause. This is an attempt to thrust English ideas upon Scotland. Until now we have been able to prevent that. We have no system of pensions in Scotland, not even in our Poor Law, and those of us who are opposed to such a system intend to vote against it now.

The CHAIRMAN: Is it your pleasure that the Motion be withdrawn? [*Cries of* "No."]

Question put, "That Sub-section (1) stand part of the Clause."

(10.20.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 237; Noes 170.—(Div. List, No. 151.)

*(10.34.) Mr. RITCHIE: Looking at the time we have now arrived at, I propose to move to report Progress, so that the Committee may see the Government Amendments on the Paper. I hope to-morrow we may commence the discussion of Sub-section 2, dealing with licences in Scotland, and that we may have some hopes of going on to a rapid conclusion of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

(10.35.) Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Government propose to take Wednesday?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): The Amendment of which notice has been given by the First Lord of the Treasury bears a little resemblance to an Amendment of mine moved a week ago and rejected.

The CHAIRMAN: That is not relevant to the Motion before the Committee. I have no doubt the Committee will allow the right hon. Gentleman to state the difference, but he must not argue the question.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: My Amendment proposed that this Bill should be hung up, and that the money should accumulate until Parliament had dealt with two principles, namely, the power of the Magistrates to refuse to renew licences, and the increase of the Licence Duties in respect of the improvement in the value of public houses, caused by the extinction of other houses.

The CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman's statement is not pertinent to the Motion to report Progress.

(10.42.) Sir W. HARCOURT (Derby): I am very glad the right hon. Gentleman has moved to report Progress until the House has had time to examine and consider the proposals of the Government. As far as we understand them on this side of the House, they do not seem to remove the fundamental objections we entertain. The right hon. Gentleman expressed the hope that the Bill would have a rapid progress. Some weeks ago we stated the terms on which this Bill should have a rapid progress. I have only to re-state those terms. This Bill will have a rapid progress as soon as the principle of paying for annual licences is removed from it. As long as that principle remains in the Bill, whether *in presento* or *in futoro*, we shall feel it necessary to oppose it as being unsound and mischievous.

(10.39.) Mr. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.): Does the right hon. Gentleman propose to proceed with this Committee to-morrow? As the Government propose to omit some of the clauses, it may be necessary to make some of the Amendments on the paper applicable to other clauses.

*MR. RITCHIE: No, Sir; we must adhere to the proposals we have made. It seems to me that the Amendments on the clauses to be withdrawn would hardly be applicable to the other proposals of the Bill.

MR. R. T. REID: I referred to the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage), providing that no alteration should be made in the existing law.

*MR. RITCHIE: Of course the Government have assented to that, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Grimsby would be able to bring it forward.

(10.41.) SIR L. PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.): It might facilitate the consideration of the Amendment if the First Lord of the Treasury would tell us what the precedents are for taking an annual sum and accumulating it for this purpose.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is not relevant to the question.

(10.42.) MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): We want to know exactly how we stand, and I venture to make a suggestion to the Government in the interest of the dispatch of business. They have moved to report Progress on the ground that it is desired that the House should see what is proposed. I think that we should see that for ourselves to-morrow. I cannot help thinking the Government must have some other little matter up their sleeve. They ask us, against the interest of their own Bill, to assent to this Motion to report Progress. I suggest that the proper course to adopt is to re-commit the Bill. This is a wholly different measure to that we assented to on the Second Reading. Three of the most important clauses are to be struck out. In the famous words of an Irish Judge, that is enough to capsize the intellect. The House in its corporate capacity assented to the Bill on the ground that it was a Bill to compensate the publican. ["Oh, oh!"] We now understand the three compensatory clauses are to be omitted. I said "we." Of course, if you are we, I am satisfied. Not only are the three clauses to be dropped out of the Bill, but in addition some cute Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) is to be adopted. It is well we should know what is the last mind of the Cabinet on this question. Of course, if Cabinet Councils are called so frequently as at present it is rather difficult for us to know how we stand, but I suggest that we should be told what the mind of the Cabinet was on Saturday.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order! The question is that I report Progress and ask leave to sit again.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I am resisting the Motion to report Progress. I object to the Motion unless we get from the Government some distinct announcement as to the reason why Progress should be reported, as I understand Government intend to bring in a number of new Amendments. We have assented to the Second Reading of the Bill on one ground, and they are going to ask the Committee to pass it on another.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The hon. and learned Gentleman asks why we have made the Motion to report Progress. We have done so in answer to an appeal, made at 5 o'clock, from the opposite Benches, that the Government should report Progress when the first sub-section was disposed of. I think the hon. and learned Gentleman will find it is not in accordance with the practice of the House to re-commit a Bill under such circumstances as exist in the present case.

(10.48.) MR. T. M. HEALY: Five o'clock and 11 o'clock are different things. The Government are responding at 11 o'clock to what they were asked at 5 o'clock.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The hon. and learned Gentleman is quite mistaken. We were asked to report Progress when the first sub-section was disposed of, and we have agreed to that suggestion.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The Government were asked at 5 o'clock to report Progress. [*Cries of* "No."] My hon. Friend the Member for Aberdeen appealed to the Government at 5 o'clock not to go on with the Bill at all to-day; but they insisted upon the Scotch Members considering the Bill. Now, at 11 o'clock, they consent to report Progress. I say that is not a fair way in which to treat the House. I will make another suggestion to the Government. They profess to be anxious to make progress with the Bill. I suppose that to-morrow we shall reach the Irish clauses of the Bill. If so, would it not be reasonable that the Government should accept the proposition made by the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), who in this matter is stronger than the licensed victualling party of the Government, that the Irish Members should be allowed to deal with this matter themselves.

(10.55.) SIR G. TREVELYAN: I was about to rise to move to report Progress when the right hon. Gentleman opposite did so, and on precisely the same grounds. New Amendments of great importance are to be proposed, and it will require time for hon. Gentlemen to see whether their Amendments to Clauses 5, 6, and 7, that are going to be struck out, could be attached to any of the clauses of the Bill, in order that if the Bill was forced through the House we shall not be committed to the principle of compensation without any of the safeguards which some of the Amendments on the Paper will provide.

(10.56.) MR. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.): I quite agree it was understood that Progress was to be reported to-night when it was convenient, but I did not understand Progress was to be reported for the express purpose of beginning afresh to-morrow. I understood Progress was to be reported to give the Scotch Members time to arrive at a comprehension of the various bearings of the changes which have been made and——

MR. RITCHIE rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

(11.0.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 248; Noes 215.—(Div. List, No. 152.)

Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House will, To-morrow, again resolve itself into the Committee on the Bill."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

(11.20.) MR. WALLACE: I beg to move that the Bill be set down for Thursday. I do so on the general ground that some little time is required to ascertain exactly how we stand in this matter in the light of the new attitude which, I think in your presence, Sir, was described by the right hon. Gentleman. I think the Government are taking far too light a view of the difficulties that surround the process of completely apprehending and understanding, in all its bearings, the new situation in which they have placed their business in this, as well as in other matters. It is not simply a comprehension of the proposition put before us, but the surveying of it in that historical light in which all their proceedings now require to be set. There are such a variety and number of complications that invite the attention of the contemplative mind in considering the proceedings of the Government in respect to any of their measures, large or small, that the cautious understanding is at once awakened to the necessity for a proper interval for research and consideration. I do not know, Sir, that I should be in order if I endeavoured to convey to your mind an understanding of what has been done, or was attempted to be done, in Committee, but, perhaps, you will allow me to say that while in connection with a matter purely relevant to the Scottish side of the question, I was promptly closured by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie), who, if he does not take care, will rapidly realise a description once given of him by a prominent and distinguished leader of the Party to which he belongs—I was closured while yet in the incipient stage of a very short speech, intended to be an endeavour to show special reasons why Scotch Members should be considered in this matter. It has come with entire novelty upon us, and, speaking for myself, and I think I may speak for some of my Colleagues, we do not at once grasp the full significance of the proposal before us. I have a certain dim sense of the ridiculous in the situation the right hon. Gentleman has put before us to-night, necessarily dim in view of the circumstances and the appreciation of Members from the country from which I hail. I feel faintly and indefinitely convinced that there is something approximating to the farcical in the position in which we are placed towards the Scottish nation, and I and my Colleagues may require to consult our doctors before we can get a proper sense of the situation into our heads, and as many of us have important engagements to-morrow, and require a certain time to recover from the operation our not-sufficiently discerning compatriot has imposed on men of his own blood, it is necessary, in the serious and very important aspects of the case—though I may say the more serious aspect naturally impresses me more profoundly—it is necessary that we should have a longer interval than the right hon. Gentleman seems disposed to allow us. I quite suppose that when the Government proposed to report Progress they thought they had kept their word to the letter, but they proposed to report Progress with the object that the House, not to speak of the Scotch contingent of the House, should have time sufficient to understand the altered situation, and adapt their necessary Amendments to the new position of affairs. I venture to say this is quite impossible if we only see the exact nature of the Government Amendment, and have time to study its effect to-morrow morning. I must, therefore, seriously propose that the Committee shall not be resumed until Thursday.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "To-morrow," and insert the word "Thursday,"—(*Mr. Wallace,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'To-morrow' stand part of the Question."

(11.25.) MR. STOREY: In a sentence or two I must reinforce the suggestion of my hon. Friend. I do not intend to allude to the precise point raised that we shall not have time to put down our Amendments, but I venture to represent to you, Sir, as guardian of the business of the House, as well as to the Government which is supposed to direct us, that an Amendment is to be moved, of which you have no official cognisance; we have only heard it read out, we have not had it set down, and cannot measure its importance; but there is more in this matter than the mere question of putting down Amendments. The Amendment I may state in effect is this: the Government propose that the money shall be tied up in a purse and put away, not being appropriated during this Session of Parliament. Now, I venture to suggest to you, Sir, as Speaker of this House, that there is no precedent for such a proposal as the Government have now made; and so convinced am I on that point that I intend to raise the question before the Bill is taken in Committee again, and to ask you, Sir, whether, under the Standing Orders and practice of Parliament, such an Amendment is in order. The law of Parliament hitherto, and for 100 years, has been that the money granted and raised by taxation shall be appropriated during the year, either in the Bill providing the money or in future Bills passed in the same Session of Parliament, and I challenge right hon. Gentlemen, and I challenge the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as the highest Government authority in the absence of the First Lord of the Treasury, to produce a single precedent in this or any Parliament where a proposal was made and successfully carried, granting a sum of money to the Government, ostensibly for the service of the year, and then the Government came down, saying, "After all, we do not need it for the service of the year, so we will tie it up for future use." I say that would be getting money under false pretences from the people of the country, and, inasmuch as there are important questions of precedent to be raised, I submit it is unreasonable and unfair that we should be asked to discuss the matter to-morrow. It is now nearly midnight. We shall have this Amendment before us in our Parliamentary Papers, sent to us in the morning, and unless Members are far less indolent than myself, we shall have but a short morning in which to consider the Amendment as one it may be desirable to modify, as well as to search the history of Parliamentary finance, so as to be able to establish my contention, which I am sure I can establish. This goes to the root of the whole question. I submit that Parliament ought to have time allowed it to consider these matters, and I strongly support the Amendment, so that, instead of being forced unfairly—I may venture to say indecently—to take the matter tomorrow, some reasonable time should be afforded to the Opposition and its leaders to consider all the bearings of the question with full information. We are asking the Government only for what is just and reasonable. I submit, in the peculiar circumstances of the case, considering the great change which has taken place, and the important Constitutional point that may be raised, that we ought to take this question on Thursday.

(11.31.) MR. GOSCHEN: It is impossible for the Government to accept the suggestion. However plausible may be the suggestions which have come from the hon. Member who has just sat down, we have learned sufficient lessons to take them at their true worth. Let me remind the House of what has been the conduct of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. We had assurances from the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian that we might hope to get the Committee on the proposed Standing Order without much discussion. It was shown at once, however, what command the right hon. Gentleman had over his own followers. ["Question."] It is all very well for Members opposite to allow their champions to call "Question" when we show reasons why we cannot assent. I am giving reasons why we consider the suggestion that we may get on with the business by accepting the Amendment as a mere sham. If we were to take other business to-morrow, it would be treated as the business to-night has been treated, with which we hope to make some progress. We were asked to report Progress, and when the hon. Member for Glasgow suggested what was entirely in accordance with the spirit of the agreement, he was thrown over by hon. Members below the Gangway, who endeavoured to speak one after the other. It is very astonishing how sensitive hon. Members are who attack the Government on every point. There is on the Paper the Bill dealing with the housing of the working classes. There is an hour and a half to get on with that Bill if hon. Members would give us the chance. The suggestion that we should postpone the question until Thursday would not advance business at all, for we know the manner in which hon. Members have acted. I am not dispossd to discuss the merits of the question. The merits of the question are to be argued, it seems, upon every Motion of adjournment, upon every Motion for Progress, upon every sub-section. The hon. Member who has just sat down, and the hon. Member who preceded him, say they have no time to consider their Amendments. If they devoted the time during which they have been speaking on this subject to considering their Amendments they might do something. Hon. Members know the bearing of the Amendment of my right hon. Friend. Hon. Members have had ample opportunity since the announcement of my right hon. Friend to consider what Amendments should be put down. According to all the traditions of the House the Government would be absolutely justified in proceeding with the Bill to-morrow.

(11.40.) MR. J. MORLEY: The genial and conciliatory tone in which the right hon. Gentleman has just addressed the House enables us to realise the horror with which Gentlemen behind him look forward to an Autumn Session, which might leave the right hon. Gentleman as Leader of the House. An Autumn Session, we have been told, would lead to the withdrawal of the First Lord of the Treasury. Bad as an Autumn Session might be, it would be still worse if for eight or nine weeks we were to have the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer delivering speeches couched in the tone of the speech he has just addressed to us. He has made some remarks on our votes on the Closure Motion. Our answer is very simple. I voted against the Closure because I considered the manner in which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board rose and interrupted the hon. Member for East Edinburgh was one of those performances which needed to be protested against. The right hon. Gentleman assures us that the Government have learnt their lesson. I do not think that they have even yet learnt it, if we are to judge by the idle concession that they have made with regard to the Local Taxation Bill. We have still some other lessons to teach right hon. Gentlemen on that Bench. My hon. Friend the Member for Sunderland made a reasonable point which the right hon. Gentleman could have shortly answered. He asked whether there was any precedent for this proposal to accumulate money for a stated object. That was a legitimate point, and ought to have been answered. If the right hon. Gentleman had answered it he would have shown some respect for his political opponents. With regard to the immediate Motion before the House, why should not the Western Australia Bill have been fixed for to-morrow, and this Bill resumed on Thursday? No reason whatever has been given for not adopting this apparently convenient course.

(11.45.) MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): We have not yet heard a reply to the appeal made to the right hon. Gentleman. I think we have a right to some answer on the part of the Government. Surely they should re-consider their position. They are not treating their opponents fairly, and I think they are placing themselves in a false position.

The House divided:—Ayes 241; Noes 198.)—Div. List, No. 153)

Main Question put.

MR. SEXTON: If this Motion, Sir, be adopted after 12 o'clock, will not the effect be that we will have to resume consideration in Committee on Wednesday?

MR. SPEAKER: I must put the Main Question.

MR. SEXTON: It is now past 12 o'clock, and the Motion says "to-morrow." I submit it is now Tuesday.

MR. SPEAKER: The House will observe that the Motion was made on Monday.

MR. SEXTON: And carried on Tuesday.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That this House will, To-morrow, again resolve into the Committee.

SUPPLY REPORT.

Resolution [20th June] reported.

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

CLASS III.

"That a sum, not exceeding £37,586, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1891, for the Salaries of the Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners of the Metropolitan Police, and of the Receiver for the Metropolitan Police District, the Pay and Expenses of Officers of Metropolitan Police employed on special duties, and the Salaries and Expenses of the Inspectors of Constabulary."

Resolution agreed to.

CUSTOMS CONSOLIDATION ACT (1876) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 247.)

Bill, as amended, considered; to be read the third time upon Thursday.

BOILER EXPLOSIONS ACT (1882) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 339.)

Bill read a second time, and committed for Wednesday.

EAST INDIA (CIVIL SERVANTS).

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Select Committee be appointed to consider and report upon the alleged grievances of the Uncovenanted Civil Servants of India arising from the change in the relative value of gold and silver money and their leave and pension rules."

The Committee was accordingly nominated of:—Mr. King, Mr. Howorth, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Bristowe, Viscount Baring, Sir William Plowden, Mr. Barbour, Mr. Alfred Pease, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. MacNeill, and Sir John Gorst.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Sir John Gorst.*)

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Motion whether there is any hope of getting any Report from the Committee this Session with regard to the grievances of the Uncovenanted Indian Civil Servants?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): I am afraid that, owing to the long delay that has taken place in the appointment of the Committee, it may be difficult for them to report during the present Session.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): May I suggest to the Government that they should ask for the appointment of a Royal Commission rather than of a Select Committee, because in that case the Commission will be enabled to carry on its inquiries during the Recess, which a Select Committee of this House cannot do. I should add that I propose to put down an Amendment to the Licensing Bill, that the £350,000 which the Government propose to give for the extinction of licences should be allocated so as to recoup these Indian Civil Servants for their losses instead of being used for the compensation of publicans.

MR. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I observe from the language of the Motion that the Committee is to inquire into the alleged grievances of the Uncovenanted Civil Servants of India. All I desire to do now is to express a hope that the inquiry will extend to the grievances of the natives as well as of the Europeans.

Question put, and agreed to.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN SPIRITS.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Select Committee be appointed to consider whether, on grounds of public health, it is desirable that certain classes of spirits, British and foreign, should be kept in bond for a definite period before they are allowed to pass into consumption, and to inquire into the system of blending British and foreign spirits, in or out of bond, and into the propriety of applying the Sale of Foods and Drugs Act to the sale of home spirits, and the Sale of Foods and Drugs Act and the Merchandise Marks Act to the case of foreign spirits and mixtures of British and foreign spirits."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): While I am exceedingly obliged to the Government for moving the appointment of this Committee, I think the right hon. Gentleman, if he were in the House, would see the force of the objection I am about to make. I suggest that the principle of the Merchandise Marks Act should apply not merely to foreign spirits and mixtures of British and foreign spirits, but also to British spirits. I shall move to amend the Motion so that the last line will read—"To the case of foreign spirits, to mixtures of British and foreign spirits, and to British spirits." The subject is one of great importance to the Irish whisky manufacturers. The industry which is concerned in this proposal is one of great magnitude, because not only is Ireland affected but Scotland also. I welcome the appointment of the hon. Member for Leeds on the Committee, because, not only is he a Scotchman, but he is also one whose scientific attainments will be of great service. Perhaps a more useful Bill for the trade of the country than the Merchandise Marks Act has not been passed by the Government during their tenure of office, but, unfortunately, that Bill was not applicable to all classes of goods. On reading the Report of the Committee I see that in the article of rum alone there is an enormous consumption, and it is found that of pretty nearly every 100 gallons of rum imported from abroad 99 gallons are composed of potato spirit. With regard to whisky, the position of the Scotch and Irish manufacturers is this: for centuries whisky has been made by them of malt or a mixture of malt and barley. It was made by a process of slow distillation, but of late, science—which in this case is another name for fraud—has invented a patent still, which, by a short process of distillation, will produce what is termed "whisky" from ingredients of the most deleterious character. The result is, that instead of drinking malt, or malt and grain spirit, the public frequently swallow stuff which is made from wood fibre, treated with sulphuric acid, or a spirit made of rice or horrible brown sugar of molasses, or the dregs of molasses' casks, as well as from Indian corn. That is not whisky. I do not recommend anybody to drink whisky, but if they ask for whisky let them follow the advice of the celebrated advertisement, which says, "When you ask for Glenfield's starch see that you get it." When a man asks for whisky he ought not to get a deleterious substitute. I know it is contended that whisky of all kinds is deleterious. I am not concerned to deny that, but I say there are degrees of unwholesomeness, and those who want whisky ought not to get sulphuric acid and wood spirit, nor an article made from molasses, nor a kind of bastard rum, which is really a spirit of the coarsest and most abominable kind. I acknowledge the concessions that the Government have already made on this matter, but the Motion now made by the Government only covers foreign spirits and mixtures of foreign and British spirits, leaving the native pirate untouched in his native wilds. Why should the Merchandise Marks Act apply only in the two cases stated? I believe I shall have the support of the majority of the House in my proposal, and I should be sorry to divide the House upon it. Therefore, I hope the Government will accept my Amendment.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "foreign spirits and mixtures of."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N): My impression is that the hon. Member is not correct in his interpretation of what the reference to the Committee really covers. I understand he wants the Merchandise Marks Act to apply not only to foreign spirits but to British spirits mixed with foreign spirits.

MR. T. M. HEALY: And to British spirits alone.

MR. JACKSON: The Act referred to only applies to articles which are marked either fraudulently or in a manner calculated to mislead.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Surely if a draper advertises Balbriggan hosiery and sells the goods of Birmingham or Sheffield he is liable to punishment.

MR. JACKSON: No doubt you may punish the draper under the Trades Marks Act, but that is not the same thing as the Merchandise Marks Act. I am sorry to say that, in the absence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I am unable to accept the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman.

(12.30.) MR. KNOX (Cavan, W.): I do not like to be absolutely certain, but I do not think the right hon. Gentleman is quite correct as to the Merchandise Marks Act. I think it includes the sale as well as the import of goods fraudulently marked; and, if that is so, the only objection the Secretary to the Treasury takes to this proposal would be removed. I do not know that we should all be ready to agree with my hon. and learned Friend, who would forestall the conclusion the Committee are likely to arrive at. But the questions he has raised are of great importance to the whisky distillers of Ireland, and it is well that they should be considered by an impartial tribunal.

*(12.31.) MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I remember the question raised by the hon. and learned Member being brought up in reference to Balbriggan hosiery, when the Merchandise Marks Act was before the House.

*(12.32.) MR. TOMLINSON: The Balbriggan hose question properly comes under the Merchandise Marks Act. Imitations of these productions were manufactured first at Nottingham and then at Chemnitz in Saxony. The question now raised is rather that of adulteration than of false marking.

(12.32.) MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): The reference to the Committee is not sufficient, and requires to be amended. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer consented to appoint a Committee it was left on our mind that the Committee would inquire into the question of the adulteration of Irish and Scotch spirits; and I venture to submit that the reference will be defective unless this proviso is agreed to. I cannot consent to the construction the Secretary to the Treasury puts on the words of the Motion. It must be clear that they do not apply to a mixture of different kinds of home spirits, or deleterious home spirits, or to such an admixture of spirits as goes on very largely in Scotland and Ireland, where a fairly good spirit is mixed with a vile compound produced at home. It might be possible to apply the Trades Marks Act to such a case, or the combined wisdom of the Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench might be able to frame an Amendment to meet the point.

(12.36.) MR. JACKSON: I cannot make any proposal in regard to this matter in the absence of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but I have no objection to postpone the Motion until to-morrow.

(12.37.) SIR L. PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.): Great care will be required in framing the reference. I have no objection to the remarks of the hon. Member for Longford, but he must remember that out of the 36,500,000 gallons of spirits consumed in this country per annum, only 16,000,000 are whisky. The interests of the producers of spirits other than whisky must not be lost sight of.

(12.38.) MR. T. M. HEALY: I accept the statement of the Secretary to the Treasury, and I would just point out that the Merchandise Marks Act is not a Customs Act. It is a home Act. I would also say that, though it is true that the amount of whisky consumed is only 16,000,000 gallons, there is no reason why stuff should be sold as whisky which is, in reality, nothing but fusil oil.

(12.39.) MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): What view does the Solicitor General take of the operation of the Act?

*(12.39.) THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir EDWARD CLARKE, Plymouth): As the matter is to stand over for consideration it is hardly necessary that I should say anything upon it.

Debate adjourned till to-morrow.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 24th June, 1890.

BERKELEY PEERAGE.

Petition of Randal Mowbray Thomas (claiming to be) eighth Earl of Berkeley and Viscount Dursley, both in the Peerage of England, to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to be graciously pleased to give directions that a writ may be issued to summon the Petitioner to the present Parliament by the title of the Earl of Berkeley, together with Her Majesty's reference thereof to this House, and the Report of the Attorney General thereon thereunto annexed; Presented (by command), read, and referred to the Committee for Privileges to consider and report.

CHILDREN'S LIFE INSURANCE BILL.
(No. 97.)

The evidence taken before the Select Committee from time to time to be printed for the use of the Members of this House; but no copies thereof to be delivered, except to Members of the Committee and to such other persons as the Committee shall think fit, until further order. (No. 142.)

CUSTODY OF CHILDREN BILL.—(No. 98.)
PROTECTION OF CHILDREN BILL.
(No 68.)

Special Report from the Standing Committee for General Bills, That they had considered the Custody of the Children Bill [H.L.] and had ordered it to be reported, with Amendments; and that the Committee recommend that the Protection of Children Bill [H.L.] be not further proceeded with.

CUSTODY OF CHILDREN BILL.
(No. 98.)

Reported from the Standing Committee for General Bills, with Amendments: The Report thereof received: Bill re-committed to a Committee of the Whole House; and to be printed as amended. (No. 143.)

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN BILL.
(No. 68.)

Bill (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

TRUSTEES APPOINTMENT BILL.
(No. 84.)

FOREIGN JURISDICTION (CONSOLIDATION) BILL.—(No. 109.)

Reported from the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c., with Amendments: The Report thereof received; and Bills re-committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

WORKING CLASSES DWELLINGS BILL.
(No. 107.)

Reported from the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c., without Amendment; and re-committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

FACTORS (SCOTLAND) (No. 2) BILL.
(No. 108.)

Reported from the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c., without Amendment; and re-committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

COURT OF CHANCERY OF LANCASTER BILL.—(No. 93.)

Reported from the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c., with Amendments: The Report thereof received: Bill re-committed to a Committee of the Whole House; and to be printed as amended. (No. 144.)

DEEDS OF ARRANGEMENT BILL.
(No. 106.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

*Lord MACNAGHTEN: My Lords, I have to ask you to allow this Bill, which has passed the House of Commons, to be read a second time. The object of the Bill is to amend the Deeds of Arrangement Act, 1887, so far as regards its application to Ireland. That Act applies to both England and Ireland, and provides for the registration of all Deeds of Arrangement between a debtor and his creditors in the Bills of Sale Office, and also in the Bankruptcy Court having jurisdiction. At the time when the Act was passed there were no local Courts of Bankruptcy in Ireland. That defect was remedied by an Act passed in 1888, which established local Courts in Cork and Belfast, and made provision for establishing local Bankruptcy Districts, as occasion might require. The object of this Bill is to provide, in the first place, for the local registration of Deeds of Arrangement in Ireland, and, in the second place, it provides for the registration of proposals of arrangement between a debtor and his creditors under the Irish Bankruptcy Act, 1857. That, my Lords, is the whole scope of the Bill. It involves no controversial matter; it has, I think, the support of all the Members from Ireland, whatever their political opinions may be; and it has, I believe, the good will of the Government. I move that the Bill be read a second time.

Bill read 2ª (according to order), and committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACTS AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 122.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

*Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH: I ask your Lordships to read this Bill a second time. It is purely to amend the Scottish part of the Schedule in the Act of 1882. That Schedule provides for certain conditions and circumstances in which various of the Local Bodies in Scotland shall, for the purpose of the Electric Lighting Act, be the Local Authorities named in the Act. Doubts have arisen as to the proper meaning of the Scottish part of the Schedule, and in certain burghs in Scotland it is not certain whether the Police Commissioners, the County Council, or the Gas Commissioners are, in the eye of the law, the Local Authority for the purpose of Electric Lighting. In the course of the past winter several of them have applied to the Board of Trade, to know in which of those capacities they are the Local Authority within the meaning of the Act. The Board of Trade have been advised by the Law Officers of the Crown for Scotland that there are doubts and ambiguities in the Schedule as it stands, and the sole purpose of this Bill is to remove those doubts. A considerable amount of correspondence has taken place between the Department and the various Local Authorities concerned, as to the proper course to pursue and the way in which this should be done. I am now able to say that, with one exception, that of the Town Council of Glasgow, the Bill which I have to ask your Lordships to give a Second Reading to, is an agreed Bill, and I believe no conflict will arise with regard to it. Under those circumstances, unless it is desired to ask any questions about it, I will abstain from taking up any more of your Lordships' time, and I will now move that the Bill be read a second time.

Bill read 2ª (according to order).

*Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH: My Lords, under the circumstances, and as time is very valuable—it is almost a question of days whether three important towns in Scotland will be able to have their Electric Lighting Provisional Order, passed during the present Session of Parliament—I would ask your Lordships to facilitate the passage of this Bill through the House, by allowing it to be taken in Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

Bill committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT.

*Earl SPENCER, in rising to call attention to the decision of the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice, on a case submitted by the Somersetshire County Council, in relation to the respective powers of the County Council and the Standing Joint Committee, as to the management, control, maintenance, and erection of buildings connected with Assize, Sessions, and Justices' Courts, police stations, &c., and to ask whether Her Majesty's Government intend to introduce any Bill to amend the Local Government Act in respect to Standing Joint Committees, said: My Lords, I have put down on the Notice Paper a question which is of considerable interest to the various County Councils in the country. By the Act of 1888, Clause 29, power was given, when any difference of opinion arises between a County Council and the Standing Joint Committee, for a case to be stated to the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court, in order to obtain the opinion of the Court, on the subject in dispute.

In consequence of this, the County Council of Somerset, having a dispute as to their jurisdiction with the Standing Joint Committee, referred the case to the High Court, and the High Court gave an important judgment on the subject. It refers to the management and control of county buildings, and the question was whether the actual control rested with the Standing Joint Committee, or whether the County Council had jurisdiction over those buildings. In the Report of that case the head note is as follows:—

> "A difference of opinion having arisen between the Somerset County Council and the Standing Joint Committee as to the maintaining and repairing buildings for Assizes and Sessions purposes: Held, that though the property is vested in the County Council, the Joint Committee have complete control over, and can direct the expenditure of funds which it is the duty of the County Council to find the means of supplying. Held, further, that both bodies can issue regulations for managing the buildings so long as these do not conflict."

Now, my Lords, that is a very important decision, and a great many of the County Councils in England have read it with considerable surprise. They were quite aware there was some ambiguity in the wording of the Act, and I think I may say here that there is considerable ambiguity as to other clauses of the Act; at the same time, they did not expect that such complete control was to be handed over to the Standing Joint Committee. The result of it is that in most counties hardly any buildings at all, except the bridges, remain under the control of the County Council. It may happen that the County Council have to erect a Council-room. If the Council-room is to provide accommodation for the Justices or the Judges, then the County Council no longer have control over the Council-room, and the Standing Joint Committee have, by this decision, the complete ordering of the room, without consulting the County Council at all. All police stations, all Magistrates' rooms, and any room which may be used by the Magistrates or the police, are handed over bodily to the Standing Joint Committee, and the County Council are obliged to pay whatever sum the Standing Joint Committee may order. That is very clear from this decision, and Mr. Justice Cave distinctly says: "The only thing which the County Council have got to do is to pay the Bill." My Lords, I think that is a very serious matter, and it is one on which a very strong feeling exists throughout the country. There is, moreover, one extra important matter in the judgment which, I think, needs elucidation, and which, I think, if not dealt with by Her Majesty's Government, may really create a very serious difficulty indeed. It is with regard to the last part of the inquiry, namely—

> "To which body is transferred the power of making Standing Orders and making regulations as to the general management and control of the said buildings or any of them."

Now, with regard to that, Mr. Justice Mathew, who was one of the Judges of the High Court who gave the opinion in this case, says this—

> "Power appears to be conferred on both parties, and they may conflict with each other."

That is a very serious matter. I think a very serious conflict of opinion might arise between the Joint Committee and the County Council in a matter of this sort, and it is very poor consolation to read the end of the learned Judge's Judgment, where he says—

> "If a question should arise as to which order should be obeyed, the Courts, I trust, when that question arises, will have no difficulty in saying what the proper decision ought to be."

That, I repeat, is a very poor consolation to those who are administering affairs in the County Councils. Thus, there may be distinct orders given, one set of orders being given by the County Council, and another set of orders given by the Standing Joint Committee; and I think it is very important that the Government should state whether they intend to deal with that matter, and should give their opinion, if possible, on the whole question. I am not quite clear whether, under Section 29, there is an appeal. The words of the section are very doubtful, but I think, from an answer that has been given by the President of the Local Government Board in another place, he seemed to imply that an appeal in another important case, the Warminster case, might go forward. If there had been an appeal pending in this Somerset case, of course I should not have troubled your Lordships with it, but as a considerable time has elapsed and no appeal has yet been brought, I think I am entitled to bring this important matter forward, and ask the opinion of the Government upon it. My Lords, I cannot help saying a word or two upon the general question of Standing Joint Committees, because this has opened the question, and it is one in which, sooner or later, some change must take place. When the Bill of 1888 was passed there was very considerable objection, not only on the side of the House to which I belong but on the other side too, to the establishment of a dual authority in the new County Administration. It was said that there was no reason whatever why, if a Municipal Council, through their Watch Committee, could manage the police of their boroughs, the new County Councils, either by themselves or through a Committee, should not manage the police of the county, and, with regard to that matter, a strong feeling was expressed. I venture to say that, though happily in the case of my own county no conflict has arisen between the Standing Joint Committee and the County Council, for nothing could have been more conciliatory than the attitude of both the County Council and the Standing Joint Committee, still there have been very serious administrative difficulties to be dealt with, and we have seen how easily very serious difficulties might arise. Take the question of finance. I believe I am not overstating the case when I say that in most counties the Standing Joint Committee have the control of one-third, or more than one-third, of the whole expenditure of the county. The whole of that third of the expenditure is taken out of the control of those who are elected by the ratepayers whose representatives have nothing to do but to carry out the orders of the Standing Joint Committee. Then with regard to the police. The police in most counties, it certainly has been so in mine, have been employed in a great variety of duties. Happily, there has been very little crime, and they can very easily carry out many administrative Acts which, without their assistance and services, it would have been very difficult for the county to have carried out. Take, for instance, the Weights and Measures Act, a measure which I am sorry to say is going to throw perfectly needlessly an enormous expense upon various counties. That Act has, in most counties, been admirably administered through the police. Now, the Act which has been brought in makes it impossible, in a great many places, and certainly in my county, for the police to continue administering that Act. At the same time, we have in various places police stations and other facilities connected with the police service, and the County Council, in administering the Weights and Measures Act must have constant recourse to police stations, and in some respects to the police. If the Joint Committee, who have the control of police stations, are in opposition and in conflict on many subjects, as they might well be with the County Council, we, who represent the ratepayers of the county, would be put to an enormously increased expenditure, and there would be constant friction and difficulty in administering this part of the Act. Take another very important matter—we had a Debate on the subject, your Lordships will remember, a short time ago—that is the Contagious Diseases of Animals Act. That Act could not be worked, I venture to say, except at enormous expense, without having recourse to the police. Happily, we have come to terms with our Standing Joint Committee; but if the Standing Joint Committee resisted and refused to give the assistance of the police for the purpose of carrying out this Act, we should have disease among animals spread broadcast all over the country. Those, my Lords, are two instances where I think the dual authority works exceedingly ill. Then I will give another instance. Take the appointment of officers. There is no more important officer than the Clerk to the Council. The gentleman who is Clerk to the Council has generally been Clerk of the Peace. As your Lordships know, Lord Lieutenants of counties formerly had the appointment of Clerks of the Peace. When this new Act came into force those appointments, which have been taken from the Lord Lieutenants, were given to the Standing Joint Committee. Mark what the result of that is. The Standing Joint Committee, half of whom might have been perfectly ignorant of any of this new work connected with the County Council, have the appointment of the most important officer of the Council. The Council have no voice in the matter whatever. That seems to me to be a very gross scandal, and it might lead to very great difficulty indeed. Then take the question of clerks. The County Council have a great deal more work than Quarter Sessions, and in many cases they have had to increase their staff, but they cannot appoint their clerk if that clerk had had anything to do, say, in collecting fees for the Magistrates; according to the interpretation given to the Act that matter would have to go to the Standing Joint Committee. My Lords, I have given those instances to show how difficult the working of this dual system is, and how important it is that some change should take place with regard to it. Now, I understand that in some counties great difficulties have arisen—in Leicestershire a very serious conflict of opinion has arisen between the County Council and the Standing Joint Committee in regard to a police rate. I am informed that a good many County Councils in England have petitioned for the abolition of Standing Joint Committees. There is one county which has done a very remarkable thing, that is the county of Gloucester. In the opinion of the majority of the County Council of Gloucester the Standing Joint Committee seems to be so much more important than the Council itself that they have established a Standing Joint Committee twice the size of the County Council. I will explain to your Lordships how this is: they have appointed the whole Council to be the representatives of the Council on the Standing Joint Committee, and the Magistrates have to double that number. So that you have this extraordinary anomaly, that you have a Standing Joint Committee twice the size of the Council, and you would have, therefore, to build a room not for the Council but for the Standing Joint Committee. My Lords, I do not know why the wise people of Gloucester did this; but it shows what importance they attach to the Standing Joint Committee, and I confess it rather points to some absurdity existing in this arrangement. I have thought it right to allude to one or two of these points because they are points of great interest in the country, and as this decision in the Somersetshire case brings up the whole matter it may be desirable, if the Government are going to deal with it, that they should deal with other points as well as this point with regard to the buildings. It is for that reason that I have troubled the House with these few observations, and I now ask the question of which I have given notice.

*LORD BASING: My Lords, before my noble Friend replies to the inquiry which has been made of him I should like to say one or two words, because my experience differs somewhat from that of the noble Lord who has brought forward this question. I am far from disputing the justice of the criticisms he has made upon the various anomalous provisions which pervade the Local Government Act in respect of the Standing Joint Committees. We all know that they were introduced into the Bill of 1888 as a sort of compromise, and like many compromises it has entailed many clumsy, awkward, and inconsistent provisions. But I confess, although I greatly deprecate the pushing home of the decision of the Judges in the Somersetshire case, I think County Councils in many quarters have been over frightened by the apparent completeness and fulness of that decision. At all events, in the County Council over which I have the honour to preside, it has made little, if any, difference in the mode of conducting business as regards buildings, repairs, and the maintenance of works. As regards my own County Council in Hampshire, they certainly consider that as they find the money and find the officers, it is only under their own Committees' care that important public works could be managed, and, therefore, they do not hold that the County Surveyor is at the beck and call of the Standing Joint Committee, nor do they consider that the Standing Joint Committee is competent to put their hands into the till of the County Council. They, therefore, conduct all the business with regard to the police buildings and Courts of Justice; they entrust the Committees who have to do the work with power to do it, but with instructions that they are to observe the requirements of the Standing Joint Committee. In that way the matter has worked very well, and, though difficulties have been raised from time to time, we have found that, with forbearance and good temper, anything like a conflict has been avoided hitherto, and so I think it will be hereafter. Nevertheless, the provisions to which the noble Earl has alluded may, at any time, provoke hostility and cause dissension where none now exist. It should always be borne in mind that one moiety of the Standing Joint Committee are themselves elected members of the County Council, and their places may be filled by other persons if they fail to represent the interest of the ratepayers in any way. I should be glad if the Government could see their way towards proposing some change. At the same time, if they were to open this question of the Local Government Act of 1888, with the view of making all the alterations which the little experience we have now had during two years has shown to be necessary, I am afraid they could hardly stop at the Standing Joint Committee, but that they would find far more than that enactment requires elucidation if not amendment and change.

*EARL COWPER: My Lords, as the whole subject of County Councils and Standing Joint Committees has been raised by the noble Earl who asked this question, I may be allowed, perhaps, as a Chairman of a County Council, to say that, though in the first instance I was certainly inclined to think it would have been better to have had the Police Committee appointed by the County Council, like all other Committees, and that it would be quite safe to entrust the management of the police to the representatives of the ratepayers, yet I do hope we shall not have any alteration made now, for I think that just as we have begun to get into the performance of our work, and just as every Committee has begun to understand its business, and to know what it has to do, there ought to be some very clear, very decided, and very great proof of positive inconvenience existing, before we begin tinkering once more with this measure, after so short an interval since it was passed. I think, in calling out for change, we should be rather like the gentleman in a famous sporting novel, who was always beginning to alter his stirrups just as the hounds began to run. I can safely say that in my county there has been no friction whatever. The first thing that happened was that a great number of members appointed upon the Standing Joint Committee by the Magistrates were members of the County Council, while, on the other hand, a great many of those appointed by the County Council were Magistrates, so that many members of the Standing Joint Committee scarcely know whether they were put upon it by one body or the other. I confess I think the instances given by my noble Friend where difficulty might arise were certainly not numerous, and are such as, if you look into them, either do not exist, or could not easily be avoided. For instance, with regard to the appointment of the Clerk of the Peace, would it be fair that the Magistrates, who necessarily trust very much to the Clerk of the Peace, should have no voice in the matter? I think they should have as much to do with the appointment of the Clerk of the Peace as the other body. The appointment must either be a joint one or there must be two offices, which would probably entail a waste of money. Then, as regards the Weights and Measures Act. I certainly should be prepared, if it were necessary, to contend that it would be better not to leave the carrying out of that Act in the hands of the police. I may say that we have discussed the matter completely and fully, and we have ended by deciding that the police should have nothing whatever to do with the matter beyond seeing that in this as in all other matters the law is carried out. My Lords, I only rose to say that I hope we shall not have any tinkering with this County Council Act, at any rate at present, until we have seen a little better how it works, and, at the same time, may have been able to see whether other alterations might not be advantageously made.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY: My Lords, I should like, in a few words, to support what my noble Friend opposite has said, having had some experience in County Council work as Chairman. In my own Council, I may say, we have had no difficulty whatever in working this measure. We laid down, and very rightly, I think, that the members of the County Council should be all non-Magistrates. That was a happy arrangement, but the effect of it was this: that half of the Standing Joint Committee was composed of Magistrates, and the Magistrates themselves elected several members who were on the County Council. As a matter of fact, the County Council has a very considerable majority on the Standing Joint Committee. But no practical difficulty has arisen hitherto, though the County Council did petition to have a change, but only half the County Council was present, and the resolution was carried only by a small majority. I think it would be very unwise to make a change at the present time, without further experience. All the arguments we have heard this evening in favour of a change are just the arguments we heard at the time of the passing of the Bill, and I would add, for myself, the opinion that at present it is not advisable to change the present system. I think in an important matter of this kind we should get all the experience we can before making alterations. Every year we are picking up more experience, and I think it would be very unwise to again unsettle this matter without more practical knowledge of how it works.

*LORD MONK BRETTON: My Lords, as Chairman of another County Council, I should like to say a few words. I differ from the two noble Lords who have just spoken. I should be very glad to hear the Government declare that they thought the Standing Joint Committees could be dispensed with, and that they were prepared to bring in a Bill to abolish them. I say that without the least personal feeling against the Standing Joint Committees, because, in the case of the County Council to which I had the honour to be elected, we have worked most harmoniously with the Standing Joint Committee, and there has been a fixed determination on both sides to avoid any possible collision or friction. But I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that the existence of a third statutory body, alongside of the Quarter Sessions and County Council, is surplusage, and tends to render the transaction of business cumbersome. Assuming that the Standing Joint Committees are to be continued until we have further experience of the working of the Local Government Act for some time longer, and for certain purposes, I still hope that the powers given in regard to county buildings, which is the immediate question raised by Lord Spencer, will not be withdrawn from the County Councils; and I use the word "withdrawn" expressly because it was generally supposed that the Local Government Act intended to make the County Councils really the possessors of the county buildings. It was generally believed that the Act had done so, but then came the decision in the Somersetshire case, and the decision in the Somersetshire case has left the County Council with a dry legal estate. I admit that the Act is not very clear, and the position is rather an embarrassing one. The prevailing opinion, however, was that the County Councils were, to all intents and purposes, the owners of the buildings, subject to the obligation to provide the necessary accommodation for the Justices, to allow the proper use of them for the Justices and for the police; and that the Joint Committee was a sort of tutelary Divinity, to intervene if that obligation was not fulfilled. Now, the effect of the Somersetshire decision is that the Joint Committee are the absolute masters, and that they have power to erect, repair decorate what they please, and as they please, and then, as my noble Friend said, send the bill to the County Council, who have nothing to do but to pay it. Well, that, I think, is a very anomalous and a very unsatisfactory condition of things, and the decision puts the County Council in a very false position. My noble Friend Lord Basing pointed out that the Joint Committee was a body on which the County Council was represented in equal numbers with the Quarter Sessions. That is perfectly true; but there is this peculiarity in the case, that this Joint Committee, on which the two bodies are represented equally, is the master of the one and is not the master of the other. No doubt there are a good many ambiguities and anomalies in the Act, which further experience will show require correction. I am content to wait for those; but as regards this particular point, it appears to me that a short Bill might very well be brought in to prevent the real intention of the Act from being defeated, as it were, by an accident; and that that might be done without waiting for other Amendments or alterations of the Act. As I said at first, I hope that before a very long time the Joint Committees will be dispensed with altogether, but as regards this question of public buildings it does seem to me to be so inconvenient a state of things which we are placed in by this Somersetshire decision, that I trust the

Government will say they are prepared to bring in a short Bill which will restore the position which the Local Government Act intended.

LORD WENLOCK: My Lords, if you are not wearied with the remarks of the various Chairmen of County Councils who have addressed your Lordships, I should like to say a few words with regard to the question which has been asked by my noble Friend Lord Spencer. One point which has not been brought out, I think, is as regards the financial question. As Chairman of the Finance Committee of my own Council, I found there was some danger of their losing the grant made by Government, and that the Finance Committee would find itself mulcted, without any fault at all of its own, to the extent of one-half of the loans of the county. That is an important point, and is a matter to be guarded against. Section 80 of the Local Government Act gives the control to the Finance Committee in all financial matters, but now that control seems to be taken out of its hands. Therefore, I think, in this respect there is a source of great danger to the ratepayers, unless Government finds some satisfactory means of placing the matter on a more satisfactory footing. In my own experience there has been some slight friction, as regards buildings, between the County Council and the Standing Joint Committee. It was only the other day that I received, as Chairman of the Finance Committee, a Report calling my attention to the fact that my own action upon the Standing Joint Committee was unsatisfactory. The matter in question was one in which the Standing Joint Committee recommended that a large sum should be expended on county buildings; and, as Chairman of the Finance Committee, I thought the expenditure ought to be carefully watched. The Council were very much with me in the matter, and against the Standing Joint Committee; and if it had not been for this decision in the Somersetshire case, I believe they would have taken the matter up to the High Court. I hope, after the remarks which have been made by the noble Lords, who have spoken from experience of the working of the Act in their own Councils, Government may see their way to put this question on a more satisfactory footing, because we have now had experience of the difficulty in working which may arise and which may become more serious in future.

THE EARL OF JERSEY: My Lords, it is evident this is a question which excites considerable interest among County Councillors; and I think it is very fortunate that we should have had the varied opinions and experience of so many Chairmen of County Councils. The question of the noble Lord may be divided under two heads, one dealing with the Somersetshire case, and the other dealing with the wider question of Standing Joint Committees. I need not, I think, follow the noble Lord right through what he stated with regard to the Somersetshire case, because the decision was a very simple one, handing over to the Standing Joint Committee the control of all the buildings which have to do with the administration of justice or with the police. By that decision the County Councils are declared not to have the right of exercising the powers which they originally thought they had, but it may be that that interpretation of the law by the High Court of Justice has reference to what the intention of Parliament may have been when the Act was passed. But I must point out that it does not rest with a Department of the Government to interfere at all with the law. They must accept it as it is laid down by the Courts of Justice. Still I may state that the Government are quite alive to the importance of this point, and that, whenever a Bill is brought in to deal with Amendments generally, which may be found desirable, of the Local Government Act, it will not be left out of consideration. Now, as to the wider point, as to the existence or non-existence of the Standing Joint Committees, I must observe that this system was adopted by Parliament, after careful consideration and discussion, as the best means of meeting what was an acknowledged difficulty. The Joint Standing Committee is, as has been pointed out, composed not of aliens, but half of the County Council and half of Magistrates, and though it is perfectly true there may be opportunities for friction to arise, yet I think the experience of most Chairmen of County Councils is—it certainly is my own—that those opportunities have not been taken, because there has been a very strong desire on the part of members of County Councils generally to facilitate the working of the Local Government Act, and there has also been shown that strong common-sense which I hope will always be a characteristic of the English people when they are entrusted with the carrying out of any important work. But, my Lords, it does not rest with me to enter into a long defence of the Standing Joint Committees. As has been pointed out, the Bill has only been passed within the last two years, and certainly the experience of the Department so far has been that it has worked well. In the circumstances, I am sure the noble Earl will not be surprised when I tell him that it is not the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill upon the subject. I do not know really that I can say more than that.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, I cannot say that I have derived any great comfort from the speech of my noble Friend, who has just sat down, on behalf of the Government. He has been good enough to tell us that the particular question arising out of the decision in the Somersetshire case will be, at some period or other, which is, I am afraid, likely to be somewhat distant, considered by Her Majesty's Government. Therefore, I do not think we can rest with much hope upon the remarks which have been made upon that point. But really, my Lords, the point is a very important one; and I cannot help believing that it was not the intention, either of Her Majesty's Government, or of Parliament, in passing the Bill of 1888, to place the control of a great portion of the county buildings completely in the hands of the Standing Joint Committee, and to take it altogether away from the County Council itself, putting aside lunatic asylums, which, I admit, are buildings of great importance, by far the larger portion of the county buildings are, by this decision, completely taken out of the control of the County Council and handed over to the control of the Standing Joint Committee. That was not at all the view, as the noble Earl has stated, which was taken by the County Councils when they first entered upon their duties. With regard to the County Council of which I have the honour to be the Chairman, we always supposed, and I had the best reason for believing that we were right in that opinion, because I took some pains to inform myself upon the matter, that though the County Council was bound to supply the buildings required by the Standing Joint Committee for the purposes of police and the administration of justice, it rested with the Council to determine how those buildings were to be erected, to go to contract for their erection, and to control the whole matter. Now, this decision tells us that the County Council has nothing to do with the matter at all, except to vote the money required, and to leave the Standing Joint Committee to go to contract, to direct the surveyor, and to have the whole business carried out altogether under their orders. My Lords, I venture to say that if the Hampshire County Council is acting as the noble Lord, Lord Basing has described, I am afraid they are acting in contravention of the decision in the Somersetshire case, because they are doing exactly what we did before the decision in the Somersetshire case, and what we have been recommended by our legal advisers to abandon. Now, my Lords, if the Government did not intend, and I do not really think they did, that this should be the case, and if it was not the intention of Parliament either, surely there is ground for introducing a short measure to put the matter right, because, although serious difficulties have not yet arisen, serious difficulties may arise at any moment. In the case of my County Council we had actually gone to contract for certain buildings under our original interpretation of the law; the Somersetshire case was decided, in the meantime, before they were erected, and we had to give up the whole matter and refer it to the Standing Joint Committee, for them to deal with as they pleased, and make the contract afresh if they thought fit. Now, I do think a very strong case, at all events, has been made out for restoring the system to that which, I believe, was originally intended, by both Government and Parliament. Then, with respect to the general question, I should like to say a few words, and they shall be but few. I do not know whether noble Lords have altogether realised what seems to me to be the fact, that this body, the Standing Joint Committee, is a body altogether without precedent in this country. It is a body which has now the power of decision in reference to one-third, or more than one-third, of the whole county expenditure. In the case of the West Riding of Yorkshire, with which I am connected, the sum with which the Standing Joint Committee has to deal is upwards of £100,000 a year. It has the power to make requisitions upon the County Councils to levy whatever rate they please for providing that sum, and the Council is bound to obey those requisitions without contest or inquiry. Now, my Lords, let me ask you to consider what this body is. This body—I take the case with which I am best acquainted, that of the West Riding, which, I may say, presents the matter under a very favourable aspect, because it is comparatively a numerous body—is a body consisting of 38 members, 19 of whom are elected by the County Council and 19 appointed by the Justices, and they have the entire disposal of over £100,000 a year of the ratepayers' money, and absolutely without any appeal whatever! The old Police Committee had to report to Quarter Sessions, and there was, therefore, a power of revising their proceedings in Quarter Sessions. I admit it was very rarely done, but nevertheless the whole body of Justices could revise their proceedings in Quarter Sessions. There is no such power in regard to this body. They decide the matter for themselves; they make the requisitions, and the County Council can be "mandamussed," I am told, if they do not obey. I venture to say, that for a body of that kind so composed, having absolute power without any appeal against their proceedings or any control by anybody, to have power to spend such a sum as I have mentioned, is altogether without precedent in this country, and it is certainly contrary to what I have always understood the President of the Local Government Board to have declared to be the fundamental principle of the Act of 1888, namely, that the representatives of the ratepayers were to have the control over the county expenditure. But, as I have said, the result is that the control of one-third of that expenditure is taken out of the hands of the County Council by this decision, absolutely and entirely. Now, my Lords, with respect to one other matter I wish only to say a few words—that is, the question of the appointment of the Clerk of the Peace. If there is any officer who ought to be appointed by the County Council I think it is their own clerk, the head of their office. The person who is to manage, under them, all their business, and who has to take their orders, ought to be a person in whom the majority of that Council have absolute confidence. But even such an officer as their clerk is not to be appointed by the County Council, but is to be appointed by the Standing Joint Committee. It is perfectly possible, indeed it is very likely, that the Standing Joint Committee, with the best intentions, would appoint a person who would not be acceptable to the majority of the County Council, and I say that the Clerk of the Council is a person who ought to be altogether acceptable to the majority of those he is intended to serve. I think it was my noble Relative behind me who spoke, I thought, as if he supposed the Clerk of the Peace was appointed by the Justices of the Peace. Of course, if my noble Friend did so, it was a slip, because he is as well aware as I am——

EARL COWPER: If the noble Marquess will pardon me, what I said was that I thought it was fair they should have a voice in the appointment of their own clerk, and that I knew it had been done previously by the Lord Lieutenants.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: But they had nothing to do with the appointment of the Clerk of the Peace in old days; he was appointed by the Lord Lieutenant. If it is thought that because the Clerk of the Peace has certain duties to perform connected with Quarter Sessions therefore he ought to be appointed either by the Justices or by the Lord Lieutenants, you had better separate the two offices than perpetrate such an anomaly as to take the appointment of their own clerk out of the hands of the County Council. That, my Lords, seems to be an illustration of the extreme anomaly of investing the Standing Joint Committees with these controlling powers. My noble Friend the Earl of Harrowby has said that he hopes no hasty change will be made in regard to this matter; but he was obliged to admit that his County Council, however he might explain it, had themselves passed a resolution in favour of a change. My County Council have passed a resolution, not quite, but almost, unanimous, in favour of a change, and one member of that Council, who is well known to some of your Lordships, (Mr. Dent), in that discussion said that whereas he had himself suggested this Joint Committee in Quarter Sessions, when they were considering the Bill, he was now convinced that it was an inconvenient arrangement, and that the powers of control ought to be left with the County Council. My Lords, it has been often said, in the course of this discussion, that no irritation has yet arisen. I am happy to say that I can bear the same testimony in regard to the West Riding; but that being the case, so far, this is exactly the time when the matter can be discussed without raising all the difficulties which would attend bringing up disputed questions between County Councils and these Standing Joint Committees. The question seems to me, I confess, to be a question of principle. The establishment of these bodies is anomalous, and altogether, as I think, inconsistent with the principles upon which the Local Government Act was founded; and I do hope, in spite of the natural caution with which my noble Friend, representing the Government, has spoken, that Her Majesty's Government will, in the course of the Recess, consider the whole question.

CONTROL OF RIVERS AND WATER-COURSES.

QUESTION—OBSERVATIONS.

*Lord BELPER, in rising to call attention to the necessity of giving to Local Authorities some control over rivers and watercourses within their districts for the purpose of prevention of floods, and to ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will consider the desirability of conferring on County Councils defined and strictly limited powers for this purpose, said: My Lords, the question I have put down upon the Notice Paper is one not only of some interest to County Councils, but also to your Lordships and the public, and especially those who live in counties which are subject periodically to inundations from the rivers in their districts. I am very conscious of this evil, as I myself live in the neighbourhood of two rivers. At the outset, I should like to say that I am thoroughly aware of the extreme difficulties which surround this question on account of the very large number of interests which have to be considered, interests which, owing to the various minor Acts of Parliament which deal with the question, have had their powers extended or curtailed by those particular Acts of Parliament in different districts. Therefore in any suggestions I am going to make, I hope I shall make none that are unreasonable, or that will in any way interfere with those interests, or which could reasonably be taken exception to by those ratepayers who are not themselves sufferers. The question of the conservation of rivers is one which has attracted a large share of the attention of Parliament, both here and also in the other House. In 1887, a Committee of your Lordships' House took a large amount of evidence from skilled witnesses, and from persons who were conversant with the various local circumstances, and there were, I believe, at least two Bills introduced into your Lordships' House, dealing with the matter. In successive Sessions the question was discussed, both in the House of Commons and in this House, and, although no legislation actually took place, I think one of the Bills, at any rate, that of the noble Lord Earl Spencer, passed through this House. Since that time the question, as far as legislation is concerned, has been allowed to slumber; but I think that the interest in it has not abated is clear from the fact that almost immediately on the formation of direct Councils of the ratepapers, this was one of the first questions taken up in the counties which are subject to floods. The county of Huntingdon was the first to move in the matter. There they passed a resolution in favour of some powers being given to them. The neighbouring county of Cambridge also, I believe, took up the question, and the County Council of Nottinghamshire, of which I am Chairman, has passed a resolution very much in the terms of the notice which I have placed on the Paper of your Lordships' House. Therefore, I think, I may be allowed to assume that there is an evil existing which has to be dealt with, and which has been recognised by both Local Authorities and by Parliament. If you look at the evidence brought before the Committee to which I have referred, it is abundantly clear that there has been a large amount of damage done by flood to agricultural land, and also that those poor people who live in villages and small towns subject to floods, suffered a large amount of loss, discomfort, and even of sickness from that cause. I should like to say at once that I do not wish to suggest any legislation on the lines of the Bills which have been previously brought into your Lordships' House. I do not wish, in the slightest degree, to criticise those measures, but I venture to think that public opinion has somewhat modified on this question during the last 10 years. Your Lordships will remember that those Bills gave an enabling power for the purpose of setting up authorities in different localities, under which Boards might be formed which would have very large powers of dealing with the surplus flood water in their neighbourhood; and the principal contest and opposition upon those Bills arose, I think, on what are called the rating clauses. There was a very strong feeling among those who do not suffer from floods themselves that they should not be rated, in any degree at all, in order to relieve the lands of those who were less fortunately situated. I must say that I think this feeling with respect to rates has increased, because, generally speaking, the rents of agricultural land in the neighbourhood of rivers have decreased during the last few years, and there is certainly a strong feeling that we ought not to pass any legislation which would be liable to increase the rates on lands which are now heavily rated. But the point which I wish 'specially to present to your Lordships is that, whatever may be your opinion with regard to such measures, there are certain obligations which are imposed by law both on private individuals and on those who have rights over rivers, which ought in the first instance to be enforced. Clearly, if you look at the circumstances, which must be known to many of your Lordships, there are many of those obligations under which conservators of rivers, millowners, and others, have been placed, which are never carried out at all. It is perfectly true if a private individual chooses to prosecute, if damage results from carelessness, he may do so; but there is an indisposition to prosecute. What is everybody's business is nobody's business, and private individuals do not like to place themselves in the position of public prosecutors. The consequence is that no action is taken, because there is no body or power which has any control over rivers for this purpose, and there is really no power whatever of enforcing the law, if it exists. Now, I do not wish to trouble your Lordships at greater length than necessary, but I think I ought to call your attention to certain instances of the sort which arise where those obligations are not carried out. I will mention the cases which have come within my own knowledge, and I have also found that all those cases are absolutely confirmed by the evidence of the various witnesses called before the Committee in 1877, who, I may say, were resident in all parts of the country. First, let me take the case of flood-gates and weirs. It is an extremely common incident of rivers, where rights have been given either for the purpose of navigation or to millers, that weirs have been erected and flood-gates with them. An elementary duty of those who have had such powers given them over rivers is to keep those flood-gates properly open, not only while flood-water is actually coming down, but for a sufficient time to enable the water to get off before the flood has taken place. That is a duty which may be recognised, but it is certainly not carried out; and the witnesses before that Committee spoke to the importance of having some special authority, which shall take care that those flood-gates on rivers shall be kept open for a particular time, which may be necessary to allow the water to come down. Then with regard to weirs. It is, of course, the duty of the Navigation Authorities or owners to keep their weirs free from weeds and rubbish; but there is an even more important point to which I wish to call your Lordships' attention, and that is, that in many cases, to my own knowledge, and it is, no doubt, also within the knowledge of many of your Lordships, weirs have, during some years past, been erected perfectly legally, and under pretence perhaps of repairing them have been raised it may be several inches, which has had the effect of raising the water above the original height. In regard to this matter I should like to mention this one point: in the evidence given before that Committee the present Speaker of the House of Commons gave some most valuable testimony with regard to floods in the rivers in his neighbourhood, and he mentioned a case which actually occurred within his own knowledge. A millowner finding he did not get quite as much water as he wished for his mill, actually built a wall right across the river! And though the height of the wall was afterwards modified, as the Navigation Authority had to go to Parliament for the purpose of its being abolished, yet it seems almost inconceivable that anybody having a mill upon a river could build a wall right across the stream without any interference whatever from anybody in the neighbourhood. My Lords, it is something like a scandal that there should be no Public Authority of any kind which should possess a power of interference with anybody who may choose to act in that way on a river, under circumstances such as I have mentioned. Then there is the question with regard to beds of rivers. Undoubtedly floods are often caused by the beds of rivers becoming silted up from not being kept properly clear. Many of the witnesses before the Committee spoke to the fact that though that duty is imposed upon companies which have navigation rights, they are never carried out, because there is nobody to interfere for the purpose of enforcing that obligation. I believe that any County Council, acting through their surveyor, and with a Committee properly formed to look after such matters, would be able to do a great deal in the way of keeping beds of rivers free from silt and rubbish coming down. Then there is the question of bridges. As your Lordships are aware, when new bridges are now built County Councils have power over them in certain ways. If it is a bridge on a main road, the County Councils have themselves power, or if it is a bridge to which they have to contribute in any way, to see that the arches of the bridge are wide enough to permit the flood-waters to come down through them; but in respect of any ordinary bridge the County Council would have no power whatever, and many bridges have been built which would seriously interfere with the flow of flood-water, and, therefore, cause floods in the neighbourhood. I might mention one case within my own knowledge of a bridge over the River Trent, at Nottingham. That was a very old bridge, with a considerable number of arches. The surveyor for the borough of Nottingham gave evidence that, when the old bridge was done away with, and a new bridge was placed in the same position, it actually lowered the height of the water 18 inches. Your Lordships will, therefore, understand the importance of seeing to that matter, and the necessity of taking care that the waterway is kept open in rivers and streams. I will only mention one more case, that is with regard to new schemes under private Acts of Parliament which may be got by Local Authorities, such as the Corporations of large towns. I myself know a case in point, and many other cases were mentioned before the Committee where Acts were got for the alleviation of floods by Corporations; greatly for their own benefit, undoubtedly, but the inevitable result is that, unless there is some authority which can watch them and see what they are doing, the flood waters are sent down much more quickly on the lands below them, and, though the town may benefit, the county may suffer. If the County Councils had some power with regard to rivers, of course they could see that any scheme that was carried out in their neighbourhood would not interfere with the streams or water over which they have jurisdiction. Now, my Lords, I have mentioned a few cases, and I believe many more might be mentioned where, if some authority of this sort could be given, it might be valuable. It may be said that the rules and regulations under which rivers are governed vary so much that powers to interfere may not exist. Even in these cases, however, I think the County Councils might do a great deal by arrangement and by conciliation, and by inducing agreement among the different authorities along the banks of the rivers. I would call your Lordships' attention to this point, that it is not to the interest of anybody on a river, either Navigation Companies or mill-owners, that floods should be allowed to occur. By a little activity and timely attention those floods could be diminished, and, therefore, I believe, all the authorities would feel themselves interested in acting with the County Councils for the purpose of seeing that the necessary precautions were carried out. There is only one other point with which I will trouble your Lordships, and that is, if you agree that some sort of power ought to be given to a Local Authority, whether that power ought not to be entrusted to the County Councils. The County Councils now represent all classes. They do not merely represent the land-owners, but ratepayers of all classes equally with the land-owners. They have acting under them a qualified surveyor, who is generally an engineer also, who is perfectly competent to deal with such matters. Such suggestions as might be made could be carried out really without any great expense on the part of the County Councils; and if the question of expense arose, it is clear that a body directly representing the ratepayers would not incur expense unless they thought it for the benefit not only of the people living on the banks of the river, but of the county generally. I should like here to point out that you have already conferred on County Councils powers very similar to those which I am mentioning with regard to the prevention of floods in reference to fisheries, and in regard to the pollution of rivers. The powers which I ask for them with respect to floods are almost precisely identical with those which they now have for preventing the pollution of streams. The power of prosecuting and of combining with other bodies should be given as far as might be necessary for the purpose of carrying out these matters. I am well aware that the powers given in regard to the pollution of rivers are not very extensive, and perhaps for that reason, if adequate, they are more likely to be successful. I would venture to make the same remark in reference to floods, that if the powers given were too extensive, they would be more likely to lead to friction than powers less extended. They would obtain the support of manufacturing people better than more extended powers. I have only now to thank your Lordships for the very kind attention which you have given to my remarks on what I am afraid I must call, in one sense, a very dry subject. I have put no

Motion on the Paper, and I only ask the Government for their favourable consideration of the matter. I am well aware that there may be many of your Lordships who might think that more extended powers would be desirable; but I will only say that I do hope the Government will seize the opportunity of the County Councils being now established for taking the first step in the matter, even though it may be a very small one, that is of grappling with an evil which is universally acknowledged in this House and throughout the country, and which has been too long standing in the way for settlement by Parliament.

THE EARL OF JERSEY: My Lords, I think the House will quite agree that the subject which the noble Lord has brought forward is one of great importance in many counties. Personally, I may say that I was one of those who were anxious that some Bill of the character to which he has alluded should be passed some years ago; but, as he is aware, great difficulty was experienced in passing the Fisheries Protection Bill, partly, if not mainly, on account of the incidence of rating. The noble Lord has asked whether the County Councils would not be the proper authorities to carry out any future measure in regard to the prevention of floods, and certainly I am pleased to be able to say that, so far, the Department which I represent entirely agrees with him. But I must point out that at the present time there are no general powers belonging to existing Local Authorities; and therefore, before any such measure as that to which he alludes could pass, not merely an extension of powers, but really a new Bill would be required. I think we have heard to-night quite sufficient to show that any Bill dealing with County Councils, however small in its inception it might be, would have a tendency to greatly increase in size. Bills in passing rapidly through Parliament have a tendency that way. What I have to say, in answer to the noble Lord, is that the points to which he has alluded will be carefully and fully considered by Her Majesty's Government when any measure dealing with the extended powers of Corporations is brought in.

ZANZIBAR.

QUESTION—OBSERVATIONS.

The **Earl of KIMBERLEY**: My noble Friend Lord Rosebery has given notice of a question which he desired to ask the noble Marquess, but he is unable to be present, having duties elsewhere. He has, therefore, requested me to ask the noble Marquess opposite the question on the Paper. Perhaps I may make one remark in order to explain it. It relates to a passage in the noble Marquess's Despatch 10 days ago concerning the recent arrangements in East Africa. The noble Marquess there says that—

> "England will further assume, with the consent of the Sultan of Zanzibar (which has been given), the exclusive protectorate over the Sultanate, including the Islands of Zanzibar and Pemba."

The question which my noble Friend Lord Rosebery desired me to ask is this:—1. The exact meaning of the expression "the Sultanate of Zanzibar" in Lord Salisbury's Despatch of 14th June, 1890; 2. If maps will be furnished to the House showing the exact limits of the various territorial proposals involved in the new Convention. As your Lordships are aware, the Sultan of Zanzibar exercises authority over parts of the coast as well as over Zanzibar and Pemba; and, therefore, for the purpose of rightly understanding the arrangement which has been come to, it is desirable to know exactly what is meant by, according to the noble Marquess' Despatch, "the Sultanate of Zanzibar," over which the protectorate is to extend. The maps referred to in the second question would, no doubt, show precisely the boundaries of the territory in reference to the protectorate.

The PRIME MINISTER and SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of Salisbury): I imagine that the word "Sultanate" has the same relation to Sultan as Monarchy has to Monarch, or Empire to Emperor. The protectorate over the Sultanate of Zanzibar means, I imagine, the protectorate over the territory which is under the government of the Sultan, or under his suzerainty. If the noble Earl asks me to give him an enumeration of those territories, of course I shall meet with greater difficulty, because there is a certain amount of controversy attaching to some portions of them; but, generally speaking, they consist of Zanzibar, the islands with which that is connected, and a considerable portion of the coast. With regard to the second question, as to maps, I inquired to-day, and I was told that the maps have already been sent down to the House of Lords this morning. If that has not been done I will take care that they are sent down without any delay.

House adjourned at five minutes before Seven o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 24th June, 1890.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

BURNLEY RECTORY BILL [LORDS]

(*By Order.*)

Order for Second Reading read.

(3.5.) **Mr. MACLURE** (Lancashire, S.E., Stretford): In moving the Second Reading of this Bill, it will be necessary that I should occupy the time of the House for a few moments in order to explain how the necessity for the Bill has arisen. By an Order in Council, dated the 28th of March, 1890, Burnley has been created into a Suffragan Bishopric. This Bill proposes to make provision for the maintenance of the Suffragan Bishopric, and it has received the approval of the Archbishop of York, the Bishop of Manchester, and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. The present Rector of Burnley, Canon Townley Parker, is the owner of the advowson of the living, which is now worth £4,000 a year, with a population of 13,000, the rest of the spiritual wants of the town being provided for by other churches, which are not so well endowed. The proposal which Canon Parker makes is that, on the voidance of the living by him, he should surrender to his successor—the Bishop Suffragan of Burnley—the sum of about £2,000 a year, leaving the remaining £2,000 to be divided among the smaller churches of the town, and extended beyond the present parish of Burnley. A somewhat similar arrangement was made in the case of the Suffragan Bishopric of Stoke, which received the sanction of this House. In this case it is an absolute free gift on the part of Canon Parker, who surrenders this valuable property simply for the benefit of the town in which he has worked for something like 38 years. As the arrangement has received the approval of all the authorities I fail to see what possible objection can be made to such a noble gift. The Bill has already passed the House of Lords without opposition, and I now beg to move that it be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Maclure.*)

*(3.10.) MR. SPENCER BALFOUR (Burnley): In moving the Amendment of which I have given notice, I wish to say that I entirely concur as to the merits of the gift which the Rector of Burnley proposes to make. I have no doubt that he is actuated by the highest motives of benevolence and generosity, and that he is desirous of taking the best course of dealing with the very large funds of this somewhat remarkable rectory. But the objections to the Bill are of a numerous and weighty character. In the first place, is it desirable that a question affecting the status, position, and organisation of the Church of England in East Lancashire should be decided by a private Bill in the same way as other questions are decided by a Railway or Canal Bill? My hon. Friend says that there was no opposition to the measure in the House of Lords, but the reason was that under the *locus standi* arrangements which govern the procedure of a Private Bill Committee it was not possible to formulate an opposition. My hon. Friend further states that the Bill has received the approval of the Archbishop of York, the Bishop of Manchester, and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. So far as the Archbishop and Bishop are concerned I can quite understand that they approve of the Bill which provides the parochial funds shall be applied to the maintenance of the episcopacy. But the people themselves, who ought to be consulted, have never been consulted. The measure has never even been submitted to the Vestry, and there is this remarkable fact, that it is a Bill to dispose of funds originally called into existence for parochial purposes without the consent of the parishioners being asked in any form or shape. I think before a measure of this sort is treated as a Private Bill there ought to have been some kind of Wharncliffe meeting of the parishioners, and it is unfair to say that the Bill has not been opposed, when the parishioners had no means of opposing it in the House of Lords. It is also objected that of this £4,000 per annum, which is the present revenue of the rectory, but which, it is calculated, will be considerably increased hereafter, no less than £2,000 is assigned for the purpose of creating a Suffragan Bishopric of Burnley. I submit that the churchmen of Lancashire are wealthy and influential enough to maintain a Suffragan Bishop without appropriating these funds, and if the revenue is to be diverted it ought to be diverted for local purposes. Upon these grounds, and these grounds only, I have been asked by my constituents at Burnley, who have not had an opportunity of being consulted in the matter, to oppose the Bill. Everybody appears to have been consulted except those who are most particularly interested. In the case of Stoke, which is the only analogous case, the Hybrid Committee to which the Bill was referred expressly introduced a provision that a future Suffragan Bishopric should not be erected in Stoke-upon-Trent. This Bill is directly opposed to the decision then arrived at, because it proposes that every Suffragan Bishop of Burnley shall be Rector of the parish. I beg to move that the Bill be read a second time on this day six months.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Spencer Balfour.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*(3.20.) SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, N.E., Clitheroe): I cordially acknowledge the manner in which my hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. S. Balfour) has spoken of

my friend and neighbour, the rector of Burnley, and the handsome recognition he has made of the extremely liberal spirit in which this gift is proposed to be conferred by Canon Parker. I live in the immediate neighbourhood, and know something of the circumstances of the town. I, therefore, wish to explain why I cannot agree with my hon. Friend, although I know that he represents the feeling of some of his own constituents, and of mine also, in opposing the Bill. In the first place, there has been an entire absence of opposition to the Bill in Parliament. No objection was raised to it in the House of Lords, and no Petition has been presented against it in the House of Commons. To-day is the last day for the presentation of Petitions, and up to this time no Petition has been deposited. I venture to say, therefore, that it would be a strong and extreme measure for the House to adopt the course now suggested of throwing out the Bill. My hon. Friend says that the parishioners have not been consulted, but, as far as I know, the Churchmen of Burnley unanimously approve of the measure. When it was first announced that the rector proposed to make this generous gift, there was a chorus of approval, not only from churchmen, but from the inhabitants generally, and although there has been some little opposition since, I believe that it has been based upon a misapprehension. In my opinion, this is a most liberal measure, and the kind of measure of reform which Liberals should desire to see carried out. There has long been a desire on the part of Burnley and the neighbourhood that this rich living should be re-distributed, so that other districts in the town should receive some benefit from it. Upon two occasions the rector has met that feeling. He has devoted out of the revenue of the living £150 a year, or £450 in all, to three of the poorer parishes in Burnley, and for another parish he has set aside an annual sum of £150, irrevocably as an endowment. By this Bill he proposes to devote about £2,000 a year to various districts within the ancient parish of Burnley. This Bill, therefore, simply re-distributes the resources of a large living, which is an object in itself most desirable, and one which, I think, will commend itself to the House. It abolishes the private patronage now connected with the living. At present the living is entirely in the hands of a private person—the Rector of Burnley, who can do what he likes with it. He can sell the advowson, with the consequent scandal of putting it up for sale in a newspaper advertisement. Such a scandal will be prevented for ever if this Bill is passed. Sooner or later the Rector proposes to retire, and his successor will not only be Rector of Burnley, but will be able to give a helping hand to the Bishop of Manchester as the Suffragan Bishop of Burnley, the Bishopric having already been constituted by an Order in Council, dated March 21, this year. My hon. Friend says that it is a serious thing to decide a matter of this kind by a private Bill. I quite agree with him. I very much dislike the system of private ownership in connection with these matters, but the present Bill destroys the very thing to which he objects, and if the measure passes, it will be impossible hereafter to deal with the living by a private Bill. At present, however, it is the only course open. My hon. Friend says that the revenue is likely to increase. I am not sure that it will be so, seeing that a large portion of it is derived from leases for 999 years, and, although there may be an increment when the leases fall in, I hardly think that my hon. Friend looks forward 999 years. There are two alternatives open to the House—either to pass the Bill, which will be a great reform and a benefit to the town of Burnley, or to reject it, and to continue the present order of things, which appropriates this revenue of £4,000 for the benefit of a population of 13,000, instead of making it available for a population of something like 80,000. Moreover, the living will remain as a piece of private patronage, instead of being in the gift of the Bishop of Manchester, and available for wider and more general purposes.

(3.27.) MR. WOODALL (Hanley): My right hon. Friend says that there are only two alternatives in dealing with this measure. I would venture to suggest a third, namely, the precedent which was set in the case of the rectory of Stoke-upon-Trent. There are many points of similarity between the two cases. Both are rich livings; in both cases the proposal was to make a wise and generous application of the funds for the better service of the Church, and in both it was proposed to place the patronage in the Bishop of the diocese. But such a proposal, which necessarily comes before the House in the form of a Private Bill, establishes a precedent of a novel and dangerous kind, and consequently requires very careful attention. I venture to submit that the House would do well to follow the precedent established in the case of Stoke, and to refer the Bill, after having read it a second time, to a Hybrid Committee, which would inform the House of circumstances which would aid us in coming to a decision on the matter.

(3.30.) MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): I listened with attention to the speech of my right hon. Friend near me (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth), but I must say that I strongly object to deal with fragments of a huge national question in the form of a Private Bill. What would be thought if it were proposed to make similar arrangements in connection with the Army or Navy, or any other branch of the Public Service? I, for one, feel bound to protest against such a mode of procedure; and I do not think any hon. Member will be prepared to get up and say that the National Church is not, for all practical purposes, a branch of the National Service of the country. There is, therefore, to my mind, the gravest possible objection to any proposal for dealing with questions of this kind by a Private Bill. Without desiring to enter into the merits of the case, I think that we who look forward to a general measure for effecting a final settlement of all these questions will not be prepared to vote for the Bill. I, therefore, give my hearty support to the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Burnley for the rejection of the Bill. There are some features of the case which are open to serious objection. The present Rector of Burnley is the owner of the advowson. I presume that the Bill is not to take effect until he vacates the living; and, therefore, I think it is for the House to determine whether £2,000 a year is not too large a sum to leave for the incoming Rector. If we are to cut down the income of the living, I do not see why we should not lop off another £1,000, and make it available for

Mr. Woodall

the extension of the Established Church in other parts of Burnley. If a re-adjustment is required, I think it ought to cover a much wider ground. The time is not far distant, I believe, when we shall have the whole question of the endowment of the Church in Scotland and Wales before Parliament, and those who are looking forward to the increased usefulness of of the Established Church will then have an opportunity of discussing the whole question.

(3.4.) VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Lancashire, N.E., Darwen): I do not see why the hon. Member for West Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) should endeavour to convey an imputation against Canon Townley Parker for what is really a very generous act on his part. He is the owner of an advowson worth £4,000 a year, but he proposes, if Parliament will allow him, to give up this important piece of patronage, and to devote the living for ever afterwards, not only to the benefit of Burnley, but to that of the diocese at large. I do not think that we on this side of the House can support the Bill from quite the same point of view as the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth). It is not because we dislike private patronage that we support the Bill, but because we have really at heart the interests of the Church at large. The diocese of Manchester is a growing diocese, with a large population urgently in need of increased facilities for following the worship they believe to be right, and it is proposed to place at the disposal of the Bishop this large and rich living. It is a very generous act on the part of the Rector of Burnley, and one which I think Parliament ought gratefully to accept. Precisely the same thing has been done in the borough of Blackburn, although in that case it was not necessary to apply for an Act of Parliament. A living has been given there to a clergyman who acts as a Suffragan Bishop to the Bishop of Manchester, and I have never heard any objection raised to the fact that that gentleman performs functions which are for the benefit of the country at large. I do not propose to enter into the question which has been raised by the hon. Member for Bradford, but I do not think, even from his own point of view, that the question of Disestablishment will be advanced or retarded in the slightest respect by the fact that either the rector or the Bishop has the use of these funds.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I presume that the noble Lord has no intention of misrepresenting or doing an injustice to me. My views are well known, and have been often explained both here and elsewhere. I have not the slightest wish to touch any national property at all, and I would remind him that there was no confiscation of the Irish Church Fund.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE: Does the hon. Gentleman wish to confer the Church property of Burnley upon Lunatic Asylums, which is what was mainly done in the case of the Irish Church Fund? Certainly I do not hold that view, but I do not think the question of Disestablishment will be in the slightest respect advanced or retarded by anything this Bill may do. In this case the patron himself, the Bishop, and the people of Burnley, are strongly in favour of the Bill, and, seeing that it will be of great advantage to the diocese at large, I would urge the House to read it a second time, although I do so upon very different grounds from those which have been adduced by the right hon. Member for Clitheroe.

(3.45.) MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): I hope that the House will endeavour to approach the question without losing itself in that cloud of prejudice which the hon. Member for Bradford was the first to throw out, and which the noble Lord who has just addressed the House has certainly not clarified. I think we ought to look upon the matter as men of common sense. Here is a living of £4,000. The advowson is the property of the person who is now the Rector, and he has the uncontrolled disposition of that advowson. He proposes to vest it in the Bishop of Manchester, and it is further proposed so to re-distribute the value as that £2,000 shall be attached to the existing church, and the remaining £2,000 shall be apportioned in augmentation of the minor livings of Burnley. I cannot see that any possible case whatever has been made out for the rejection of the Bill. I, therefore, hope that the hon. Member for Burnley will not press his objection; and in regard to his second proposal that it should be referred to a Hybrid Committee, I confess that I do not see that it would do any great amount of harm, even if no gain is likely to result from the adoption of such a course.

*(3.50.) MR. BYRON REED (Bradford, E.): The right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees says that all the Bill does is to transfer this property from a private owner to a public servant. Perhaps the Bishop of Manchester is willing to accept that designation in a general sense, but I think in no other.

MR. COURTNEY: I meant nothing more than a general sense.

*MR. BYRON REED: I think I am entitled to place my own interpretation upon the right hon. Gentleman's words. Of course, I am unable to say what was in his mind, but I wish to point out that the loose use of terms by a right hon. Gentleman of such weight and position is calculated to render our discussion somewhat difficult. All I have to say is that the Bishop of Manchester is in no ordinary sense a public servant. He is neither appointed by the State nor paid by the State, and he cannot be dismissed by the State. He is, therefore, in no Parliamentary sense a public servant. I should like to point out to the hon. Member for West Bradford that this is a Private Bill. If the advowson of Burnley were a public endowment created by this House, it would be unnecessary to proceed by Private Bill. The very fact that the question is being dealt with by a Private Bill proves the reverse of the case the hon. Member for West Bradford would have the House believe, namely, that the endowment is national property. The Rector proposes to make an extremely liberal re-distribution of this property, and I cannot understand how such a provision can be objected to by hon. Gentlemen opposite.

(3.55.) SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): If anything is calculated to defeat this Bill it would be the speeches of the noble Lord opposite and the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. Both of them have endeavoured in a very special manner to raise the question of Disestablishment.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE: I was very far from raising that question. It was raised, and, in my opinion, most unnecessarily, by the hon. Member for West Bradford.

*MR. BYRON REED: I equally deprecate the raising of such a question. My remarks were only made in reply to the hon. Member for West Bradford and the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Perhaps I may be allowed to explain. I did not raise the question of Disestablishment. What I urged was that this property ought not to form the subject of a Private Bill, but might fairly await the time when the whole question of the present condition of the Established Church will have to undergo review.

SIR W. HARCOURT: All I wished to say was that I desire to support the Bill, and that if anything would induce me to vote against it, it would be the speeches of the noble Lord opposite and the hon. Member for East Bradford (Mr. Byron Reed). I am under the impression that the Bishop of Manchester was appointed by the State. I always thought that he was appointed by the Crown, acting upon the advice of the Minister of the Crown; and I regard the Minister of the Crown as the representative of the State. But I do not think it is necessary to discuss the position of the Bishop of Manchester at this moment. The question is whether the proposed Bill is one which, under the circumstances, would be advantageous to the town and people of Burnley. I hope the House will bear that fact in mind, and will vote upon the Bill quite irrespective of the question of Establishment or Disestablishment, which really does not arise upon it.

*(3.57.) MR. SPENCER BALFOUR: I will not put the House to the trouble of a Division if it is understood that the suggestion of the Chairman of Ways and Means is carried out, and that the Bill is referred to a Hybrid Committeee.

(4.0.) The House divided:—Ayes 172; Noes 131.—(Div. List, No. 154.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to a Select Committee of seven Members, four to be nominated by the House, and three by the Committee of Selection." — (*Mr. Spencer Balfour.*)

MR. MACLURE: I must decline to accept the Motion.

(4.11.) MR. PICTON (Leicester): Then I trust that the hon. Member for Burnley will divide the House upon it.

(4.12.) SIR W. HARCOURT: I think the hon. Member below the Gangway (Mr. Maclure) ought to agree to this proposal, especially after the suggestion of my right hon. Friend the Chairman of Ways and Means. I understand that a precisely similar course was taken in the case of the Stoke Rectory Bill. It involves a question of divided interests which ought to be considered by a Committee constituted as Committees generally are, to whom questions partaking more or less of a public character are referred.

*(4.13.) MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): I also voted for the Second Reading, although the speech of the hon. Member for East Bradford made it somewhat difficult for Liberal Churchmen to do so. I must, however, join in the appeal that, having been read a second time, the Bill should be referred to a Hybrid Committee. The measure itself, carrying out, as it does, a useful Church reform, is a step in the right direction, and ought to be considered without in any respect prejudicing any larger question. The House ought to allow the people of Burnley to be heard, and every interest to be represented, as can only be done before a Select Committee.

(4.15.) MR. MACLURE: I beg to withdraw my opposition to the Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT AND BUILDING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 132.)

Report from the Select Committee brought up, and read.

METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT AND BUILDING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL (No. 132) AND METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT ACT (1862) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 223.)

Bill reported, with Minutes of Evidence.

Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 245.]

METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT AND BUILDING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 132.)

Bill re-commited to a Committee of the whole House for Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 356.]

METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT ACT (1862) AMENDMENT BILL. —(No. 223.)

Bill re-committed to a Committee of the whole House for Thursday, and to be printed, [Bill 357.]

QUESTIONS.

THE NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERIES.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Address to the Crown on the French Fisheries dispute voted by the Legislature of Newfoundland has yet been received; and, if so, whether it will be presented to Parliament?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): The Address referred to has not yet been received. It may be expected by the mail arriving about the 2nd or 3rd of next month. There will be no objection to giving it to Parliament whenever Papers are presented.

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is in a position to give the House any information regarding the alleged conflict between French and Newfoundland fishermen?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: No such information has yet been received.

MR. W. REDMOND: Are we really to understand that the Government have taken no steps to ascertain whether these conflicts have occurred or not?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: If such an occurrence has happened, the Local Authorities must make inquiries before reporting, and it is only right to wait a reasonable time for their Report.

MR. W. REDMOND: I beg to give notice that I will repeat this question to-morrow, and until the Foreign Office take proper steps to find out whether this conflict has occurred or not.

IRELAND — POLICE AT ABBEYSIDE, CO. WATERFORD.

MR. WEBB (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on Sunday, 8th of June, a number of police constables and detectives (some of the police wearing side arms and carrying revolvers) entered the grounds of the Catholic Chapel at Abbeyside, County Waterford, as the usual open air Corpus Christi procession was being carried out, and remained on duty until the ceremonies had concluded; that on the same occasion two disguised policemen (one of them a Protestant named Rawson) entered the church with the procession and remained there until the congregation had left; and can he explain what was the object of this action towards people of the district while engaged in celebrating one of the most sacred and impressive ceremonies of their religion?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Constabulary Authorities report that four constables only entered the chapel grounds on the occasion in question. None of them wore side arms or carried revolvers. All were Roman Catholics, and desired to be witnesses of the procession.

CANON KELLER.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Very Rev. Canon Keller, parish priest at Youghal, was on Thursday last pursued whilst driving through his parish by three policemen on a car; and for what reason the rev. gentleman was so beset?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that the rev. Gentleman mentioned is actively engaged in endeavouring to promote an illegal conspiracy in connection with which he is associated with a man named Maurice Doyle, who accompanied him on the occasion in question. They were accordingly followed by the police, who appear to have acted rightly.

MR. DILLON: Is the Chief Secretary entitled to charge respectable gentlemen in Ireland with being engaged in a criminal conspiracy when no charge has been made, and no prosecution undertaken; will the right hon. Gentleman withdraw and apologise for his statement, or will he institute a prosecution against the rev. Canon?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; I see no grounds for withdrawing my statement. I do not know whether the hon. Member for East Mayo is authorised to repudiate on the part of Canon Keller any intention whatever to promote the Plan of Campaign.

MR. DILLON: Is a Minister of the Crown entitled to charge a man with crime, and then persist in the charge unless the person repudiates it? Has any criminal charge been made against Canon Keller, or is it intended to proceed against him?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If any evidence in support of a charge is forthcoming no doubt a charge will be brought. The hon. Gentleman is as perfectly aware as I am that there may be complete moral evidence—[*Home Rule cries of* "Oh!" *and* an hon. MEMBER: "Immoral"]—that a person is engaged in a particular conspiracy of this kind, which is yet not of a character to support a criminal prosecution.

MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): Does the right hon. Gentleman really take up the position that the existence of what he chooses to regard as moral evidence justifies him in making these very serious charges which he is not prepared to substantiate?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman asks me a question. I will answer it by asking him another. Does he mean to say that I am precluded from asserting of any man in Ireland that he is engaged in supporting the Plan of Campaign, unless there is evidence for a prosecution forthcoming?

MR. E. HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): Yes; and then you would choose the Magistrate.

THE PORTUMNA PROSECUTIONS.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what compensation the men are to get who were recently batoned, imprisoned, and prosecuted at Portumna, as is now admitted, at the instance of police whose evidence on oath the Magistrates refused to believe, and

who have since been exposed and dismissed from the Force?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have asked for a special Report, but have not yet received it. The facts stated by the hon. Gentleman do not agree with the Report I received on a previous occasion. As to the question of compensation, I think that the ordinary remedy should be resorted to.

MR. DILLON: What is the ordinary remedy, the police having been exposed and dismissed from the Force?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Only one man has been discharged.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Why do not the Government prosecute these men?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. and learned Gentleman does not rightly apprehend the facts of the case; but I would ask the hon. Gentleman to defer the question for the present.

LIGHT RAILWAYS.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Board of Works have reported favourably on an extension of the railway to deep water at Bantry to accommodate the rapidly increasing fishing traffic on that coast, and recommended a grant to be made under the provisions of the Light Railway Act of last Session; whether this railway extension was also recommended by the Royal Commission on Irish Public Works and sanctioned by the Grand Jury at the last Spring Assizes held in Cork; whether the Cork and Bandon Railway Company are prepared to work the extension line, and to contribute a substantial sum towards the cost of its construction; and whether, the necessary preliminary steps having been taken, the Treasury will now sanction the grant and enable the undertaking to be carried out without further delay?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): The statements contained in the first three paragraphs are substantially correct. The distance is about a mile. The cost would be very heavy, and it is thought there are other works more urgent than this.

MAGISTRACY—MR. P. M'LAUGHLIN.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the Memorial presented to Colonel Lowry, the Vice Lieutenant of County Tyrone, asking for the appointment of Mr. P. M'Laughlin to the Commission of the Peace, was signed by Mr. Hamilton, J.P., senior Magistrate for the Dromore district, the local Catholic clergy, the Presbyterian minister, and the respectable farmers and merchants of the district of all religious denominations; and if the refusal to appoint Mr. M'Laughlin was not due to the fact that he is a Catholic, whether he will state what the cause is?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not seen the Memorial referred to. But the Vice Lieutenant assures me that the fact of the gentleman referred to being a Roman Catholic was regarded by him as a strong reason to appoint him to the Commission of the Peace if possible. No public advantage would be gained by stating the reasons which I understand led to the decision in the case, which rested, of course, wholly in the discretion of the Vice Lieutenant.

MR. W. REDMOND: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that with a Roman Catholic population in the county of 10,000 there are only four Roman Catholic Magistrates?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know whether these statistics are correct. If they are they would justify the view taken by the Vice Lieutenant, that the fact of the gentleman being a Roman Catholic would be a strong reason to appoint him.

MR. M. J. KENNY: Mr. M'Laughlin is the most respectable Catholic in the district.

MR. F. A. GUY, J.P.

MR. M. J. KENNY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland upon what grounds the Lord Chancellor appointed Mr. Frederick A. Guy to the Commission of the Peace for the County Tyrone; what is the nature of Mr. Guy's connection with the county; whether he has been long resident there; and whether he possesses any real property in the district?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In regard to the first paragraph of the question, I must refer the hon. Gentleman to a reply which I gave on Friday last. I do not know how long Mr. Guy has been a resident of the county, but he has a residence and property in the district.

HELIGOLAND.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if he would place in the Tea Room an Admiralty chart of the sea round Heligoland?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I have given directions for two of these charts to be sent to the Librarian of the House for this purpose.

FOREIGN MEN-OF-WAR AND BRITISH FORTIFIED PORTS.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether we allow the free entry of Foreign men-of-war into our fortified ports, a practice different from that of other Powers; and whether Her Majesty's Government propose to issue instructions to Naval Commanders or Colonial Governors with regard to the entry into such ports of foreign ships of war and transports carrying troops?

LORD G. HAMILTON: Limitations have, in certain instances, been placed upon the entry of foreign men-of-war and transports into certain specified ports. The Admiralty are not in favour of a general or wholesale restriction, as they believe such Regulations to be unnecessary, and likely, if made reciprocal, to greatly limit the present cruising grounds of Her Majesty's Navy.

WAR OFFICE CONTRACTS.

MR. HANBURY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War on what date Messrs. Ross were struck off the list of contractors for the Government; on what date the War Office issued a Circular to the Volunteers strongly recommending the purchase of the Slade-Wallace equipment; at what date the War Office became aware that Messrs. Ross were under special arrangements with the Slade-Wallace or Wallace firm involving a practical monopoly of the supply of this equipment to the whole Volunteer Force, or whether they are now aware of it; whether, in fact, a very large proportion, practically the whole, of the sets of this equipment so recommended by the War Office have been made, and are still being made, by Messrs. Ross; whether the War Office have taken any, and what, steps to inform Commanding Officers of Volunteers that this firm was not allowed to manufacture for the Army; and on what ground the War Office thus permits and encourages the supply to the Volunteers of work and materials which it will not permit to be supplied to the Regular Forces?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): Messrs. Ross were struck off the list of contractors in March, 1888, and the fact has been publicly announced so frequently that it is impossible to suppose that Commanding Officers of Volunteers are ignorant of it. For the rest, I will refer my hon. Friend to the answer given him on the 8th of May, and will only add that so long as the equipments purchased by Volunteer corps out of their own funds are found on inspection to pass the standard required, the War Department cannot concern itself as to the source from which they come.

MR. HANBURY: The hon. Gentleman has not answered the second paragraph of the question.

*MR. BRODRICK: The second paragraph did not seem to me to be germane to the subject. The War Office have no official information as to the arrangements between Colonel Wallace and the firm of Messrs. Ross. The War Office have given and will give no orders to Messrs. Ross; but they have no control over the places to which the Volunteers may go to purchase articles out of their own funds.

MR. HANBURY: Is it not a fact that the War Office recommended the use of this new equipment, and knew that Messrs. Ross were the only people who could make it, and that the War Office issued this recommendation within a few months after Messrs. Ross had been struck off the list?

*MR. BRODRICK: No; it is not the fact. The War Office have no knowledge that Messrs. Ross are the only contractors that can make the equipment

MR. HANBURY: For the Volunteers.

*MR. BRODRICK: The Volunteers, like the Government, can obtain the equipment from Colonel Wallace's factory if they desire to do it. There was an interval of 15 months between the striking off of Messrs. Ross and the issue of the Circular.

MR. HANBURY: I beg to give notice that I will raise the whole question on the Vote for the Volunteers.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): Where is the factory of Colonel Wallace?

MR. BRODRICK: I believe it is situated in Bermondsey.

MR. J. ROWLANDS: Will the hon. Gentleman give the address?

[No answer.]

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ORDERS.

MR. OCTAVIUS V. MORGAN (Battersea): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the effect of the provisions which the Board have inserted in Electric Lighting Orders now before Parliament, authorising Local Authorities to transfer their undertakings, will be practically to confer upon the Board of Trade powers to perform functions heretofore exercised by Parliament, and also deprive the public of the means that they now have of resisting any such transfer by appearing before a Parliamentary Committee where evidence is taken upon oath; and whether the Board would have the power to administer an oath if the functions of Parliament were so vested in that Department?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): Section 11 of the Electric Lighting Act, 1882, provides that—

> "No Local Authority, Company, or person shall by any contract or assignment transfer to any other Company or person, or divest themselves of any legal powers given to them, or any legal liabilities imposed on them by this Act, or by any licence, order, or special Act, without the consent of the Board of Trade."

The Provisional Orders granted under the Act referred to require that public notice of the proposed transfer shall be given, and the transfer cannot be made without the consent of the Board of Trade, by whom the deed of transfer must be approved, and who will make any inquiries that they may consider necessary in the interests of the public. The Board of Trade would have no power to administer an oath. With regard to the merits of the clause, I wish to point out that the Local Authorities, who are representatives of the ratepayers, ought to be the best judges of their interests in matters affecting the lighting of the town.

ENGINEER STUDENTS.

CAPTAIN **PRICE** (Devonport): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if he could state to the House how many vacancies for engineer students were there last year, and how many candidates competed for them; what were the respective numbers this year; how many candidates qualified in each case; is it on account of a difficulty in getting suitable candidates for studentships that an attempt is now being made to admit assistant engineers direct from the private engineering establishments; how many vacancies have been offered with this object; and how many candidates have been got to compete for them, and with what result?

LORD **G. HAMILTON**: The number of competitors for vacancies for engineer students in this and last year were given in answer to a question by the hon. Member for Northampton on the 3rd of June. The admission of assistant engineers from private engineering establishments was not instituted on account of any difficulty in obtaining suitable candidates for studentships, but to extend the area of competition, and raise the *status* of the competitors. The proposal is to give about 10 nominations annually. Five candidates competed and three qualified at the recent examination. This is the first year of outside competition for direct appointments, and I have little doubt that in subsequent years the number of outside competitors will steadily increase.

EDUCATIONAL GRANTS.

MR. **A. THOMAS** (Glamorgan, E.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education what steps have been taken to remove the impression created by the recent Circulars from the Science and Art Department, "that all grants from that Department will be withheld in future from Higher Grade Advanced Elementary Schools"?

*THE **VICE PRESIDENT** OF THE **COUNCIL** (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): I have already stated that this matter is under consideration, with a view to a serious modification of the Circular in question; and, I may add, in order to remove the fears of which the hon. Member speaks, that in the result no impediment whatever will be placed upon Science Instruction in the schools he mentions.

GREYSTONES HARBOUR.

MR. **W. CORBET** (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, with reference to a representation made to him in April last by the inhabitants of Greystones, to the effect that the harbour recently constructed there had silted up, and is practically useless, and to his statement that Government are considering the matter, whether any decision has been come to; and whether the Treasury, in view of the fact that the plans were carried out in the face of the representations of the fishermen and boatowners, will grant the sum necessary to erect a north groyne, and dredge the accumulated shingle out of the harbour?

*MR. **JACKSON**: If the locality or the Grand Jury will contribute a fair proportion of the cost of the additional works required, I shall have no objection to directing the Board of Works to undertake them.

POLICE PAY AND SUPERANNUATION.

MR. **HOWARD VINCENT** (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can lay upon the Table a Memorandum showing the details of the Police Bill, and in tabular form the rates of pay in the Metropolitan and City Police, and the rates of superannuation now obtaining therein, and also in Constabulary Forces in Great Britain, and those given by the present Bill and the previous Bills upon the question?

MR. **DILLON**: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the question, I will ask him if he will include in the Return similar particulars with regard to the Irish Constabulary?

THE **SECRETARY** OF **STATE** FOR THE **HOME DEPARTMENT** (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I will take an early opportunity of laying upon the Table a

Memorandum, which I have had in preparation, and which will exhibit the benefits conferred upon the police by the Superannuation Bill as compared with the existing system, and will state as many of the details mentioned by my hon. Friend as can be promptly given. It would take some time to collect the required information from all the provincial forces. I must have notice of the question of the hon. Member for East Mayo.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): Will a similar Memorandum be drawn up with regard to the Scotch police?

MR. MATTHEWS: I think it would be impossible.

MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman will supply the House with the Actuarial Reports upon which the scheme of the Government was based?

MR. MATTHEWS: I will consider whether the documents can be laid upon the Table with propriety.

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster): When will the Police Bill be proceeded with?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): The Government will proceed with the Police Bill on the earliest opportunity. They recognise the grave importance of this question, and there will be no delay on their side.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): Will the right hon. Gentleman name a day? Does the earliest opportunity mean after the Local Taxation Bill has been disposed of, or does it mean immediately? It is very important that a day should be named. Why not next Thursday?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not able to name a day, but I hope to do so on Thursday.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): If the Bill passes the Second Reading, does the right hon. Gentleman intend to refer it to a Committee?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not arise out of the question.

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE NORTHAMPTON MEETING.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that a meeting,

intended to be held in the market place of Northampton, on 22nd June, by the opponents of the Local Taxation Bill, was forbidden by the Borough Magistrates to be held at that place; whether Magistrates of a Borough have a right to forbid public meetings in the market place of the Borough to protest against Bills before this House; and whether persons attending a meeting forbidden by them incur any legal penalties; if so, of what kind? I may perhaps be allowed to read a copy of the proclamation which I have here. It runs thus—

"BOROUGH OF NORTHAMPTON.

PUBLIC NOTICE ISSUED BY ORDER OF THE MAGISTRATES.

From Representations and Information laid before the Borough Magistrates this day, they are of opinion that the holding of the Public Demonstration and Discussion to be held on the Market Square to-morrow (Sunday) evening, at Eight o'clock, is calculated to provoke Disorder and a Breach of the Peace, and do Prohibit the Holding of such Demonstration and Discussion at the Place named, and Declare the same an unlawful assembly. And they warn all persons who hold, or attempt to, or take part in the same, after the Publication of this prohibition, that they are liable to imprisonment for so doing.—June 21st, 1890."

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): May I ask whether the attention of the right hon. Gentleman has been drawn to the case of "Beatty and Gillbank,' in which the Queen's Bench held that a declaration such as the Northampton Magistrates have issued was illegal, and that Magistrates have no authority to declare an assembly unlawful on the mere ground that there are persons opposed to its object who might be disorderly?

MR. C. R. SPENCER (Northants, Mid): May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman can tell from whom the Magistrates obtained the extraordinary information that the demonstration was likely to provoke disorder?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am sorry to say I cannot answer the last question put to me. I am informed by the Magistrates that they prohibited the meeting in the Market Square on the ground that a breach of the peace and disorder were anticipated, at the same time offering the racecourse as a place of meeting. The second and third paragraphs of the question of the senior Member for Northampton raise questions of law which cannot be exhaustively dealt with in the compass of an answer. I am advised that a prohibition of a meeting by Magistrates operates only as a warning that a particular meeting is likely to become an unlawful assembly, and does not of itself involve legal penalties, which will, however, be incurred if the meeting proves in fact to be an unlawful assembly.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The matter being of such grave importance I shall take the earliest opportunity of calling further attention to it.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is the law the same for the three countries?

MR. MATTHEWS: I believe there is no difference in the law.

H.M.S. *EGERIA.*

SIR T. ESMONDE (Dublin Co., S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what was the offence for which a petty officer and a seaman of H.M.S. *Egeria* were recently condemned, the one to penal servitude for five years and the other to two years' hard labour; whether the statements appearing in the Sydney newspapers as to the composition of the court martial which sentenced them, and as to the violations of the rules of evidence during their trial, have any foundation; and where these men are at present confined?

LORD G. HAMILTON: One petty officer and one seaman of the *Egeria* were tried for attempting to make a mutinous assembly and for wilful disobedience to orders, and were sentenced respectively to five years' penal servitude and two years' imprisonment. Five other seamen were tried for disobedience, and sentenced to punishments varying from one year to six months' imprisonment. The Reports of these courts martial are now under consideration at the Admiralty. I have not seen any of the Australian newspapers referred to; but the courts martial are legally constituted, and if there is any reflection on the composition of the courts such reflection is not justifiable. The men are on their way home.

SAMOA.

SIR T. ESMONDE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies when Her Majesty's Government expect the Samoan Treaty to be put in force, and what the obstacles are to its being enforced at once?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I may perhaps be allowed to answer this question. The Samoan Treaty is understood to be in force, but all the local arrangements cannot be immediately carried out. The taxes and dues authorised by the Convention are being collected. The Courts of Justice and of the Land Commission are not yet constituted, nor has the President of the Apia Municipal Council been appointed; but steps are being taken to this end, and other matters are in progress.

RAILWAY RATES.

MR. T. ROBINSON (Gloucester): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Commission appointed to inquire into the classification of goods and the fixing of rates of carriage under the Railway and Canal Traffic Act of 1888 have reported to the Board of Trade the result of their inquiry; whether he is aware that the merchants and traders of this country are very desirous of having these important matters settled promptly; and whether he will be in a position to bring this question before the House of Commons in time to be dealt with this Session?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I fully appreciate the desire of the merchants and traders of this country that effect should be given as speedily as possible to the provisions of Section 24 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888; but I must remind the hon. Member that Lord Balfour of Burleigh and Mr. Boyle sat for 84 days; that no less than 178 witnesses on behalf of the traders were examined before them; and that their inquiry was only concluded on the 21st of May. I hope to be in a position to present a Report to Parliament before the end of July. But, unless the recommendations which it will be the duty of the Board of Trade to make prove acceptable to both sides, I can hardly anticipate that it will be possible to legislate this Session.

POLICE CLOTHING.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of

State for the Home Department whether one of the grounds of difference between Mr. Monro and the Home Office related to the contract for the clothing of the police; whether this contract was entered into by the Home Office against the recommendations of the Receiver; whether throughout the greater part of 1889 the complaints of the responsible officers as to the clothing supplied were frequent; and whether in October, 1889, Mr. Monro disclaimed responsibility for the maintenance of a contract which he considered "injurious to the interests and efficiency of the Force?"

*MR. MATTHEWS: The facts relating to the clothing contract are as follows. In September, 1888, a contract for clothing was entered into with a new firm of contractors (Hammond and Co.), who made the lowest tender. This was done with the concurrence of the then Commissioner, who pointed out that the new contract would effect a considerable saving; but the Receiver recommended that the clothing of half the Force should be given to the new contractors, and of the other half to the old contractors (Compton and Co.), whose tender was higher. The Commissioner complained more than once, and with good ground, of the clothing supplied, and generally of the manner in which the contract was performed. The Receiver endeavoured, by the enforcement of penalties and otherwise, to obtain a better performance of the contract. The terms of this contract were, in reality, too unfavourable to the contractors. The Commissioner renewed his complaints in October, 1889, to the effect stated in the question. After consultation with the Receiver, I decided not to terminate the contract then. At a later period, in May, 1890, on fresh complaint by the Commissioner, and after consultation with both Receiver and Commissioner, I came to the conclusion that it would be for the interest and convenience of the Force that the current issue of clothing should be completed by the contractors, as any new contractor has at first much to learn and many difficulties in executing the work; but that as soon as that was completed the contractors should be relieved of their contract, and that course was followed with the assent of the Commissioner.

Mr. Pickersgill

OFFICERS OF THE METROPOLITAN POLICE.

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Mr. Monro suggested that by the appointment of Mr. Howard as Assistant Commissioner of Police it would be possible to abolish another office existing in the Force; and, if so, is it intended to act upon this suggestion?

*MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir; the late Commissioner did make such a suggestion. The matter is still under consideration, and I am not at present in a position to say whether the suggestion will be acted on.

MR. PICKERSGILL: Was the office that of one of the Assistant Commissioners?

*MR. MATTHEWS: No, Sir.

CONSTABLE JARVIS.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what business was Constable Jarvis in New York; and how long was he away from London?

*MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Assistant Commissioner of Police that Jarvis went to New York in November, 1888. His business was the extradition of Thomas Barton, whom he brought back to this country on the 9th of April, 1889, and who was afterwards convicted at the Central Criminal Court of forging transfers of London and North-Western Railway Stock.

MR. T. M. HEALY: How was it it took Jarvis four months to do this?

*MR. MATTHEWS: I have given the hon. Member all the information I have.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I will renew the question.

SHADOWING IN IRELAND.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the number of persons "shadowed" and the number "watched" in Ireland for each or any of the three weeks ending 21st June?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware whether this would be practicable, and must ask the hon. Member to defer the question.

LICENCES IN IRELAND.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can now state the intentions of the Government as to the suspension of licences in Ireland, *i.e.*, whether by the Government Licensing Bill or by a separate measure?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have consulted with my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board as to whether the suspension of licences in Ireland should be carried out by the Government Bill or by a separate measure; and we have come to the conclusion that it would be very difficult to deal with it by Amendments which proceed by reference to the English clauses, and it would be more convenient to deal with that part of the question, so far as it relates to Ireland, by a separate measure.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Do the Government intend to introduce a separate measure?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the hon. and learned Gentleman has a measure which has passed the Second Reading, and which might fittingly form the basis of a method of dealing with the question.

MR. T. M. HEALY: If I endeavour to make progress with the Bill, will the right hon. Gentleman make arrangements with his supporters not to block it?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The most convenient course would be that, as the Bill of the hon. and learned Member deals with part of the general question, it should proceed *pari passu* with that of the Government.

MR. T. M. HEALY: If I endeavour to put it down to-night for an early day, will the right hon. Gentleman assist me to make progress? As the Government have got one clause of their Bill, will they allow me to take one clause of my Bill?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I shall be glad to help the hon. Member as far as I can.

POSTMEN'S GRIEVANCES.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he will state the number of telegraph messengers employed in London, the scale of wages paid, the rates paid for overtime and Sunday work; whether overtime is compulsory upon them; and what proportion of those willing and qualified to become postmen are appointed?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University): To the hon. Member's four questions the answers are as follows: 1st. 2,430; 2nd. 7s., rising by 1s. a week annually to 11s.; 3rd. I have not had time to ascertain the particulars of overtime work and Sunday work; 4th. It has been for many years the practice to promote those telegraph messengers who are willing and qualified to vacancies in the postmen's force as opportunity offers.

MEETINGS OF POST OFFICE OFFICIALS.

MR. CONYBEARE: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether the Rule which has now been superseded, prohibiting postmen from attending meetings outside the Post Office buildings, applied to meetings held to discuss questions connected with their "duties or pay;" whether in the Notice recently issued by the Postmaster General for the regulation or abolition of meetings, the term "official questions" is used; and whether a postmen who attends a meeting in order to call attention to his low wages, will be liable to be punished for discussing official questions?

*MR. RAIKES: There has been no variation of terms, as the hon. Member's inquiry would seem to imply. "Official questions" was the term employed in Lord Stanley of Alderley's Notice of March, 1866; and the same term is employed in the Notice issued by myself. As I have had occasion to point out more than once, postmen are no longer forbidden, as they were until a few months ago, to hold meetings outside the Post Office buildings for the discussion of their rates of pay or any other official question. All that is required of them is that in connection with such meetings they shall comply with the necessary Regulations.

MR. CONYBEARE: I beg to ask the Postmaster General how many boys, and of what age, are being employed at the Western District Office delivering letters in place of men suspended for attending their Union meetings?

*MR. RAIKES: Six boys. Five are 18 years of age, and one is 19.

THE MUNSTER FUSILIERS.

Mr. O'KEEFFE (Limerick City): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if his attention has been called to a disturbance which occurred on Thursday last among the men of the 5th Battalion Munster Fusiliers at Limerick; whether these men (Militia) are contrary to usage compelled to lie under canvas, and that owing to rain and defective arrangements their bedclothes, &c., have been wet, and there is danger of sickness ensuing; and whether a sum of 2s. 5d. per week has been taken off the men's pay, and, as universal dissatisfaction has been excited, whether steps be taken to improve their condition, and revert to the original position of the Force?

Mr. BRODRICK: A full Report from the General Officer commanding is expected. Meanwhile, I can only state on the authority of the Adjutant that the newspaper account is much exaggerated.

THE CONSOLIDATION OF POLICE ORDERS.

Mr. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what is the present stage in the consolidation of the Police Orders, and when is it probable that they will receive the sanction of the Home Office?

Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS: I desire to ask whether it is the case that Sir Charles Warren declined to submit these Consolidated Orders to the Home Secretary; whether Mr. Monro took a different view, and nearly a year ago submitted them to the Home Secretary; whether the right hon. Gentleman proposed to submit them to a committee of three clerks, one of whom was a clerk in Mr. Monro's office; and whether Mr. Monro objected to have his own orders submitted to one of his own clerks?

Mr. MATTHEWS: I think the hon. Gentleman had better give Notice of this question. The answer to the first question is: A set of Consolidated Police Orders, prepared by a Board of Police Officers and extending to some 600 pages, is now being examined by a member of the Bar with a view to settling the language of the Orders in consonance with the law. He has not yet completed his task, and, as it is likely that questions may arise for my consideration, I cannot at present fix a date when my formal sanction will be given.

Mr. PICKERSGILL: How long has the draft of these Consolidated Orders been at the Home Office; and has not the gravest inconvenience been caused by the detention of them?

Mr. MATTHEWS: No, Sir. These Consolidated Orders have been issued from time to time, not simultaneously. The work of consolidation began a considerable time back; it began in Sir C. Warren's time, and it has been continued ever since. When Sir C. Warren left, the Orders formed an enormous accumulation, and some of them struck me as not being in consonance with the law.

CONVERSION OF THE EGYPTIAN DEBT.

Mr. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is true that France declines to discuss any proposals for the application of the economies resulting from the conversion of the Egyptian Debt; and whether the money so saved will be employed in paying the corvée in spite of France's refusal, or ear-marked until her sanction is obtained?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: The French Government have postponed the discussion, but we understand that they will shortly be prepared to resume it. It is not likely that any arrangements will be made until the matter has been further discussed with the Powers.

BELFAST POST OFFICE.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether seven members of the first-class of clerks in the Telegraph Department of the Belfast Post Office hold the additional appointment of provincial clerks in charge; whether five of these had this appointment bestowed upon them in recognition of long service and in consequence of their having been, at the time at which it was conferred, superseded in promotion to the first-class; if so, upon what grounds were they permitted to retain this appointment subsequently, on receiving promotion to the first-class; whether the discharge of the duties incident to that of provincial clerks in charge obliges the holders of the position to be absent for long periods from Belfast; and, if so, have their duties during their absence to be discharged by members of the second-class without any extra remuneration, and does their absence also cause present members of the first-class, who are not provincial clerks in charge, to be more frequently employed upon night duty; and, if this be so, whether he will constitute the present holders of the position of provincial clerks in charge supernumeraries upon the staff of the Belfast Post Office, and promote an equivalent number of the second-class to be members of the first-class, so that members of this class shall not be called upon to undertake responsible first-class duties without the emoluments appertaining to the position?

*MR. RAIKES: In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that although the case is not quite as stated in the question—inasmuch as the number of first class clerks at Belfast who act as provincial clerks in charge is six and not seven, and their appointments were not given for the reasons assigned—the aggregate absence of these officers from Belfast has been unduly large, and I am considering whether similar appointments should not be made at other offices in the North of Ireland, so as to relieve the pressure at Belfast. The Secretary to the Post Office in Ireland has the matter in hand, and will give it his early attention.

POSTAL IRREGULARITIES AT TWINEHAM.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware that considerable delay and irregularity occurs in the postal delivery at Twineham, near Cuckfield, and that on Thursday the morning letters were delivered at Twineham Court about noon by two little boys; and whether he will take steps to remedy this irregularity of the Postal Service?

*MR. RAIKES: I regret to find that there has been such irregularity in the Postal Service to Twineham as the hon. Member indicates, and I have taken steps which, I hope, will remove all cause for complaint in this respect.

THE OLPHERT DISPUTE.

MR. DALTON (Donegal, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the proceedings at Falcarragh Petty Sessions, on Tuesday the 17th, in which a man named Peter M'Ginley was charged by a bailiff on the Olphert Estate named Conaghan with assault, and in which, on a cross summons, Conaghan was charged by M'Ginley with assault and with having presented a revolver at him and threatened to shoot him, and to the decision of the Court, consisting of two Resident Magistrates, that, though Conaghan's conduct was reprehensible in this case and generally in going about the country with a revolver and threatening to shoot people, M'Ginley should be imprisoned for a fortnight and then be held to bail to keep the peace for 12 months, while Conaghan should be held to bail merely; whether he will direct the attention of the Lord Lieutenant to this decision with a view to the remission of at least the latter part of the sentence inflicted on M'Ginley, who would appear to have acted only in self defence against a murderous attack on his life; whether the bailiff Conaghan was given a licence to carry firearms; and, if so, by whom, and whether his licence will now be withdrawn; and whether, in view of the fact that this is the third instance within a recent period of human life being threatened in the Falcarragh district by persons licensed to carry firearms, a revision of the list of persons so licensed will be ordered with a view to the removal from it of the names of all persons who have abused the privilege conferred upon them, or who have not furnished satisfactory guarantees that they will use the privilege with discretion?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that M'Ginley was charged at Falcarragh Petty Sessions with a serious assault upon Conaghan, who is a bailiff, by striking him with some weapon upon the head. The evidence (for the defence) put forward by M'Ginley, as to whether the revolver was produced before or after the assault was committed, was, it is stated, very conflicting. It appears, however, as a matter of fact, the revolver was not loaded. The Magistrates made such orders as they considered the merits of the respective cases required. There does not appear to be anything in the decision calling for the exercise by the Lord Lieutenant of the prerogative of mercy. Conaghan has a licence to carry arms for his personal protection, which was issued by the licensing officer of the district. The Magistrates do not appear to have made any representation that the licence should be withdrawn. I will have their opinion asked. No complaints appear to have been received about the improper use of firearms except in one case, and in that the Grand Jury decided that the revolver was accidentally discharged.

STRADBALLY POST OFFICE.

MR. P. J. POWER (Waterford, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he has received a Memorial from the people of Stradbally and district, County Waterford, asking that a Miss Finn should be appointed postmistress at Stradbally; whether it is the practice of his Department to meet the wishes of localities in the appointment of postal officials where consistent with efficiency; and whether he intends meeting the wishes of this locality by the appointment of the lady named?

*MR. RAIKES: I have received the Memorial referred to. The practice of the Department in such cases is to select the candidate who is considered in all respects to be the most suitable both in the interests of the public and of the Post Office. In the present instance, I can only assure the hon. Member that Miss Finn's claims and qualifications shall be fully considered in connection with those of the other candidates for the appointment in question.

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether Her Majesty's Government have considered the Third Report of this Session of the Public Accounts Committee, upon the new arrangement of the Estimates, reducing the number of the Votes; and whether the recommendations of the Committee are accepted by the Treasury, and will be adopted in framing next year's Estimates?

MR. JACKSON: The Treasury has considered the Third Report of the Public Accounts Committee, and has decided to accept its recommendations, and adopt them in framing next year's Estimates.

MAP OF AFRICA.

MR. W. ISAACSON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether Her Majesty's Government will consent to issue a map of Africa showing the portions conceded to Germany, the water communications, also the heights of land, as far as is known?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: There is a map in the Tea Room which gives all the information required except the height of the mountains, and I do not think that is very important.

HELIGOLAND.

MR. SUMMERS (Huddersfield): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, agreeably to the precedent set in the case of the cession of the Ionian Islands to Greece, the Government will undertake to despatch a Commissioner to Heligoland for the purpose of eliciting the opinion of its inhabitants with regard to the proposed cession of the Island to Germany?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Her Majesty's Government do not think this necessary; they are well informed of the sentiments of the inhabitants.

MR. SUMMERS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will undertake that the proposed Anglo-German Agreement shall not be signed by the British Plenipotentiary until Parliament has had an opportunity of expressing its opinion on the Bill for the cession of Heligoland; and also whether the proposed Anglo-German Agreement will contain a clause providing that the portion of the Agreement which relates to the cession of Heligoland shall not take effect until it has been ratified by the passing into law by the British Parliament of a Bill authorising the cession?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: No such clause is necessary, for the Agreement will only provide that a Bill shall be introduced to enable Her Majesty to make the cession.

*MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I desire to ask whether the Prime Minister, in a recent speech, declared that Parliament and public opinion ought to be consulted before any surrender of territory took place?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I do not know what the Prime Minister said on that occasion; but if a question is put on the Paper, I will communicate with the noble Lord.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): Do the Government intend to lay on the Table any Papers whatever relating to Heligoland?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: Certainly, Sir; as soon as possible.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Is it intended that the island shall be fortified by the Germans as soon as they get possession of it?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I am not aware of any provision of that kind in the Treaty.

HIGH LICENCE.

Mr. SUMMERS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the intention of the Government to adopt the principle of High Licence, as embodied in the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: The question is one which should be considered by the House when any general measure dealing with licensing is under review.

POSTAL COUNTERMEN.

Mr. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he has received a Petition from the countermen of the Metropolitan Postal Districts which was transmitted to him through the Postmaster of the West Central District on the 13th of last month, asking him to favour a committee of their class with an interview; and whether, seeing that he recently granted a similar application to the telegraphists and sorters, he will accede to the request of the countermen?

*Mr. RAIKES: In reply to the hon Member, I have to state that I decided upon a Memorial from the countermen in October last, and hardly had I done so when they put in a further Memorial, and upon this I decided in February last. Notwithstanding this double decision, they have sought, in a Memorial to which the hon. Member refers, to reopen the question by a request for an interview. I have not yet had time to consult my official advisers whether I should grant an interview. I am always pleased to have an opportunity of discussing questions affecting any class of my officers with them. But the demands on my time are so great that I am not always able to afford myself this pleasure.

AXBRIDGE RURAL SANITARY AUTHORITY.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if the Axbridge Rural Sanitary Authority have secured a Provisional Order to enable them to acquire certain land under the Compulsory Clauses of "The Allotments Act, 1887;" and, if so, whether he can state the cost to the Sanitary Authority of obtaining such Provisional Order?

*The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The cost to the Axbridge Rural Sanitary Authority of obtaining the Provisional Order referred to was £6 14s. 0d. This amount includes a charge of £4 14s. 0d. in respect of a journey to London for the purpose of depositing the Petition and documents with the Local Government Board, which at present it appears to me might have been avoided. Apart from this charge, the expense incurred by the Authority was £2 0s. 0d.

THE ANGLO-GERMAN AGREEMENT.

Mr. JENNINGS (Stockport): In the absence of the hon. Member for the Peckham Division of Camberwell I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the exemption from transit dues granted by the Anglo-German Agreement to the goods of England and Germany between Nyassa and the Congo State, and between the northern end of Lake Tanganyika and the British sphere of influence, would extend, under the Most Favoured Nation Clauses, to the goods of other nations?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: I do not find in the Agreement between Germany and Portugal any parallel of latitude named, but the geographical description of the southern boundary of the German sphere of influence would nearly correspond with the 11th degree of south latitude. Should any questions arise south of the line mentioned in the Despatch, they would arise either with the Congo State or with the Portuguese.

POLICE SHADOWING IN IRELAND.

Mr. W. REDMOND: I wish to call the attention of the Chief Secretary to a letter which appears in the *Pall Mall Gazette* this evening from a New Zealand lady, in which the writer says—

> "I find some of the customs of this country very strange. I am here on a visit from New Zealand, and I am not two days in town till the police have been making inquiries about me even in such a public place as a bank, as if I were an escaped convict or suspected of felony. Why should I or any lady be subjected to such an indignity? Need I say I am a Protestant: and while my politics should not deprive me of the liberty of a citizen, they are not Nationalist, for, being a colonist, I know little of the Irish controversy. But it would be well that the colonists and English people should know that British citizens cannot move about in broad daylight without being the subjects of police surveillance."

May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in view of his statement that people are only shadowed if they are suspected of being criminals, this lady was so suspected; and will he take steps to protect at least visitors to our country from this indignity?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member asks whether this lady will be protected. I do not think she complains of being shadowed, but she does complain of certain inquiries being made. I know nothing of the facts, but will cause an investigation to be made if the hon. Member will give notice of a question.

Mr. W. REDMOND: Of course I will. At the same time, allow me to point out that the lady complains that "British citizens cannot move about in broad daylight without being the subjects of police surveillance." I think that is the most serious part of the allegation.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that to be a general observation and not a specific complaint.

Mr. W. REDMOND: I will put the question down for Thursday next.

THE NEW AMENDMENT TO THE LICENSING BILL.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I wish to ask your ruling, Sir, on a matter affecting Parliamentary procedure. By the Budget Bill, which received the Royal Assent on June 9, the Government provided by the 7th clause of the measure that the duties on spirits and beer were to be dealt with in a particular way, and that the proceeds arising out of these levies

> "Shall be appropriated as Parliament may hereafter direct by any Act passed in the present Session."

These words were inserted upon my Motion. At that time the Local Taxation Bill was running concurrently with the Budget Bill, and the one measure was regarded as a kind of companion to the other. So that these words put in the Local Taxation Bill provided that the moneys raised by spirits and beer were to be immediately spent. At any rate, the word "appropriated" used in the 7th section of that measure was not then intended to cover a locking up of the funds, but the words "expenditure and paying out of the fund." Now, the Government propose, by the Amendments of the President of the Local Government Board, to insert in the Local Taxation Bill words which give an entirely different meaning to the word "appropriate," because they propose to provide that the levies on whisky and beer shall be locked up for an interminable period, and shall be spent under an Act which may not be passed for years to come. What I submit is this: that the Government, having passed into law a measure which has now received the Royal Assent, ear-marking a certain meaning to the word "appropriate," and attaching a sense of expenditure to it, it is not in accordance with the procedure of this House that the Government can now entirely change the meaning of this Act passed in the present Session by another measure which proposes to fix to the word "appropriate" a meaning of a wholly different character.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: With reference to the observations which we have just heard, and the subject of which is new to me, I would venture to say that, as I understand the matter, the Bill now before the House does not fix a new interpretation to the word "appropriate," but entirely contravenes the meaning of the word "appropriate." The meaning of the word "appropriate" having been fixed by Statute during the present Session, the present Bill proposes that the money shall not be appropriated. If there is one word well understood in the financial practice of this House it is the word "appropriate." The term Appropriation Act, which is familiar to us all, is sufficient to illustrate our meaning.

*Mr. GOSCHEN: On the point of order, may I submit the following point:—In this Bill there were three propositions—one relating to England, another to Scotland, and the third to Ireland. In the case of Ireland the money was not appropriated for the service of the year. The case of Ireland was that a portion of the money was to be appropriated as should afterwards be determined by Parliament. I therefore submit that at that very time the word "appropriate" did not carry the narrow interpretation which the hon. Member for Longford now seeks to assign to it; but that it covered the whole of the money, including the portion which was to be disposed of as Parliament should hereafter direct.

Sir W. HARCOURT (Derby): I ask you to consider, Sir, what was the meaning then, from the Chancellor of the Exchequer's point of view, of the introduction of those words "during the present Session." They were introduced for the express purpose of securing that the appropriation of this money should be completed during the present year; and that the money should not be voted while the complete appropriation was postponed until a future period. Those words, no doubt, might have been ambiguous as they stood, but it was to remove that very ambiguity that the hon. and learned Member for Longford asked for the insertion of the words which were accepted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in order to make it clear that the appropriation, except in the case of Ireland, was especially provided for, and should be made in the present year.

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I submit, Sir, that this Bill, if it is carried into law, does comply with the provisions embodied in the Budget Bill, and that it does appropriate the money which has been voted.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Longford has raised a question the importance of which I do not think he has overrated. It is a question, I must confess, rather of constitutional interpretation than one of a point of order, upon which I venture to hope, generally speaking, my ruling would be accepted by the House. But I respectfully give the House such opinion as I have formed on the matter, although I do regard it as a matter affecting the constitutional relations of this House, and greatly affecting the whole question of Money Bills and appropriation. The 7th clause of the Customs and Inland Revenue Act, which has been passed into law, enacted that it

> "Shall be ascertained as to proportion and otherwise in like manner as the one-half of the proceeds of the probate duties applicable to local purposes is now by law divided, paid, and ascertained."

And then occur the following words:—

> "And the proceeds so paid shall be appropriated as Parliament may hereafter direct by any Act passed in the present Session."

I observe that there is an Amendment on the Paper standing in the name of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board to insert these words in the Bill now before the House:—

> "May be hereafter provided by any Act amending the Licensing Acts, and until such Act is passed shall be invested and accumulated as provided by this Act."

Now, it is a very grave question whether those words do constitute such a specific appropriation as the Budget Act directs. I certainly am not aware, in the comparatively short time that I have had to examine into the matter, of any instance of a tax being raised and the proceeds appropriated to no particular authority and to no specific object as is now the case since the three clauses have been withdrawn from this Bill. It would be, I think, for the House to consider, as a matter of policy and interpretation, whether these words of the right hon. Gentleman, moved as an Amendment, do constitute a sufficient appropriation of the sum raised and granted by the Budget Act so as to come within what is undoubtedly the general principle underlying our whole law, namely, the appropriation of money to a specific use within the then existing Session of Parliament, either partly or wholly—I say partly because, of course, there are permanent appropriations of sums extending over more than one year; but even in that case a certain sum is specifically appropriated to be expended within that year. It appears to me, on taking an impartial view—I need not say as impartial a view as I can—on the subject, that if no Act was passed within this Session appropriating the sums allotted under the Budget Act, it would be a very grave question whether the Treasury would not incur grave responsibility and grave liabilities in issuing any money or in issuing it to any body of persons as Local Authorities. There would be, as I understand, no particular direction to the Treasury from this House to issue money, nor to issue it to any particular body of persons, inasmuch as the County Authorities will not have the money allotted to them. But it will be said the money will be accumulated. I confess, looking at the matter from a Constitutional point of view, I know of no precedent for such an accumulation, and though it may be quite true that the fact of no precedent existing does not prove that the proceeding would be un-Constitutional, I think it is eminently a matter for the House to decide whether it is *ultra vires* or not, and whether such a course would be in harmony with Constitutional practice. It is a matter which I think the hon. and learned Gentleman will be justified in raising as a question of policy, or even of principle, both in Committee and, if need be, also on the Third Reading of the Bill. I have endeavoured to explain my views to the House as well as I have been able.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: On the point of order, may I ask whether your observations do not equally apply to the Irish part of the Bill, which has not been altered as the English and Scotch portions of the Bill are proposed to be altered by the Amendment of my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board?

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I submit that the Irish Secretary is in error, because there is an Amendment down in the name of the President of the Local Government Board also altering the Irish section and providing that this money is to lie up in Ireland until such time as some new Licensing Act is is passed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There may be some Amendment to the Irish part of the Bill, but substantially I submit the Irish part of the Bill does provide that the money should accumulate until some future stage—until this or another Parliament should deal with the question of Local Government in Ireland. What I desire to ask your ruling upon, Sir, is whether there is any difference, in constitutional principle, between that part of the Bill as originally framed and those parts of the Bill affecting England and Scotland as modified by the proposed Amendment?

SIR W. HARCOURT: Before that point is raised, I would submit that if the objection equally applies to the Irish part of the Bill, we have not yet come to it. We have not discussed that section; the House has not approved it. Your ruling, Sir, as I understand, will apply to the whole Bill and not merely to the Amendment proposed by the President of the Local Government Board.

*MR. GOSCHEN: It would not, Sir, be dignified for me to enter into any argument at a moment like this with regard to any of those most important words which have fallen from your lips. At the proper time, after the hon. Member for Longford has taken the course which is suggested to him, it will be my duty to submit reasons why I am prepared to defend constitutionally, and as a matter of expediency, for the proposals of the Government. I rise simply to point out to you for your consideration whether the clauses which remain in the Bill directing to whom this money should be paid do not constitute a distinct application of the money which would relieve us from the difficulty you have suggested, namely, that there would be no means of getting the money out of the Treasury. Of course, it is part of the plan that clauses should be kept in the Bill distinctly directing the mode of investment, the mode of account, and the manner in which the funds—ear-marked as it is called—should be used. There would be perfect machinery in the Bill for the accumulation and accounting for the money for a specific purpose. I think the particular difficulties, if I may say so with all submission, with regard to the manner in which the money would be dealt with, would possibly not arise when we come to the clauses which direct the investment of the funds.

*MR. SPEAKER: It appears to me that the money would be equally locked up, no matter in whose hands it might lie. Some observations have fallen from the right hon. Gentleman as to my ruling. I hope I may respectfully say to the House that my ruling on this subject is only a matter of opinion on a grave question of constitutional law. It is not intended in any way to bind any portion of the House, but, as I was asked my opinion, I did not think it would be respectful to the House not to give it.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I do not intend, as at present advised, to do more than what I conceive to be the duty of a Member of the House who is specially seised of knowledge on this matter—to appeal to the Chair, as I understand that, upon financial questions especially, the Chair is the constitutional guardian of the liberties of the House.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): It would be a great convenience to Scotch Members and the House generally if the First Lord of the Treasury would make up his mind to tell us now whether we are to fight right through again the licensing part of the Bill, or whether the Government will make up their minds to swallow the remaining bit of the leek and withdraw the Bill.

[No answer was given.]

MR. W. H. SMITH AND THE DEPUTATION OF LICENSED VICTUALLERS.

MR. T. FRY (Darlington): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is correctly reported in this day's issue of the *Times* to have said to a deputation of licensed victuallers—

> "That he gave them the strongest assurance that no part of the Local Taxation Bill was to be considered as abandoned, and that they might absolutely rely upon it that the money to be accumulated should never be devoted to any other purpose than the extinction of licences:"

and, if so, how far that statement agrees with the announcement he made in the House the same evening that the money would be at the future disposal of Parliament?

MR. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.): I have given the First Lord of the Treasury notice of a question on the same subject. The hon. Member for Darlington has read only a part of the reply given to the deputation by the right hon. Gentleman, but I think other parts of it should be read. The right hon. Gentleman is reported to have said also—

> "That the Government had been driven by the opposition of their Liberal Unionist allies to the conclusion that they could not successfully resist the 10 years' limit Amendment, and that they had, therefore, decided to postpone certain clauses of the measure."

Then he went on to say that—

> "On the other hand, he gave the deputation the strongest assurance that no part of the Bill was to be considered as abandoned, and that they might rely upon it that the money to be accumulated should never be devoted to any other purpose than the extinction of licences;'

and this announcement, it was stated, was "received with applause."

*MR. W. H. SMITH: In answer to the questions of the hon. Members, I have to say there is one portion of this report which is accurate, and that is that the proceedings were private. I can only say that the report is more or less inaccurate. I stated to the deputation all that I had said in the House a few minutes before, neither more nor less; and as every Gentleman in the House is in possession of that statement, I have given all the information I can.

MR. STOREY (Sunderland): I desire to ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury what were the precedents he referred to yesterday with regard to the leaving over of money for future use instead of its being appropriated in the Session?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not aware that I did refer to precedents, but I venture to say that the only answer that can be given on such a point must be given in Debate.

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

Thirteenth Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

NEW WRIT.

For Borough of Barrow in Furness *v.* William Sproston Caine, esquire, Manor of Northstead.

MOTION.

PROHIBITION OF PUBLIC MEETING (NORTHAMPTON).

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. LABOUCHERE, Member for the Borough of Northampton, rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House, for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, a Proclamation of the Magistrates of Northampton prohibiting a public meeting intended to be held in the market place of that town last Sunday evening, and warning all persons holding or taking part in the same that they would be liable to imprisonment for so doing; but the pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than 40 Members having accordingly risen :—

(5.32.) MR. LABOUCHERE: I beg, then, to move the Adjournment of the House, and I assure the House that I do so in no spirit of hostility to the Government. I submitted a question to the Home Secretary on the subject, and he admitted that there were important points of law involved in the matter which could not be answered in reply to a question. When the House has heard the facts, it will be seen that the case is a fair and legitimate one on which to ask for an expression of opinion from the House and the legal advisers of Her Majesty's Government, because it touches the whole question of public meetings, and, if it were allowed to pass by, the Magistrates of any town would be able to prohibit any meeting they chose. The facts are very simple. Last week it was decided by the friends of temperance at Northampton to hold a public meeting on Sunday in the market-place. The meeting was not called in any special way by the Liberals there, but the principal persons present connected with it were Nonconformist ministers of the town. There were to be two platforms in the market-place, which is one of the largest in the country. At 1 o'clock the chair was to be taken by Mr. Campion, who is the editor of a newspaper there; and at the other Mr. Manfield, a large manufacturer, an Alderman, and a Magistrate, was to preside. On Saturday the Magistrates met and asked the conveners of the meeting to hold it on the racecourse. As a matter of fact, meetings are habitually held in the market-place in Northampton; and in this case the managers of this temperance meeting had communicated with the brewery interest, and arranged that there should be a public discussion in the market-place, and it had been agreed that both parties would do their best to maintain order. Very possibly there may have been affidavits laid before the Magistrates to the effect that the meeting might lead to a breach of the peace, but I apprehend that that did not warrant the Magistrates prohibiting the meeting or saying that to take part in it would render those who did so liable to imprisonment. The Queen's Bench Division, in the case of "Beatty *v.* Gillbank," decided that the Magistrates had no right to prohibit a meeting. The question there was whether a meeting of the Salvation Army could be prohibited because some other army threatened to interfere with the proceedings. The decision was that the Magistrates had no right to prohibit a meeting. They may warn persons against attending a meeting and may tell them they must take the consequences. If they fear that individuals are going to disturb the peace, they may call on them to find securities not to disturb the peace, and may put them in gaol if they refuse to find sureties. If that be the present state of the law, I say that the Magistrates had no sort of right to prohibit this meeting and to frighten people who were going to it by telling them they would be liable to imprisonment if they attended. If this were to be permitted all meetings would be rendered practically impossible, since they could be stopped by the action of disorderly persons, who said that they were going to interfere with them. It is most desirable, in view of the fact that the Lord Chancellor is responsible for these Magistrates, who are an unelected body of men, that the Attorney General and the Home Secretary should distinctly declare to the Magistrates of Northampton, and through them to the Magistrates all over the country, that they have no right to interfere with this fair and proper action on the part of the electors of an English town. I beg to move the adjournment of the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

*(5.40.) MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I rise for the purpose of seconding the Motion moved by my hon. Colleague. I would take the liberty of suggesting that it is something new in parliamentary practice that, when a great question like that of public meeting is to be discussed, the bulk of the Ministry should at once leave the House. I make no complaint that the bulk of the Conservative Party should have done the same, because I have been in the habit of attacking them on the same ground, that they disregard the liberties of the people, and I am rather glad that my attacks have been justified by what has happened. We are apparently forgetting in England that regard for public right for which England used to be specially famed. The law is clearly and briefly stated in a little manual called *Stone's Justices' Manual*, and I will take the liberty of reading a very words from that book to the House. I find it stated that—

> "A lawful assembly is not rendered unlawful by the knowledge of the persons taking part in it that opposition will be raised to it."

If it were otherwise, any lawful meeting might be rendered unlawful by any half-dozen blackguards declaring that they would interfere with it. The position of the Magistrates is clear. I am indebted to the Solicitor General's (Sir E. Clarke) arguments in a case I shall refer to, for part of the legal arguments I shall submit to the House. I say for part of them, because it was my duty, some 28 years ago, in the Court of Common Pleas, to argue this point. The Solicitor General held that Magistrates had no authority to prohibit a meeting that seems likely to endanger the public peace. In the case of "Beatty *v.* Gillbank," the Skeleton Army having declared they intended to break the peace as against the Salvation Army, the Magistrates took upon themselves to require several members of the Salvation Army to give security to keep the peace, and the Court held that the Magistrates had no right to require such securities. Not only is the law clear that the persons convening a lawful assembly cannot be prohibited by the Magistrates from holding it; but it is also clear that if some other persons threatened to break the peace the Magistrates have no right to call upon the persons engaged in promoting the lawful meeting to give surety to the police, which shall prevent them holding the meeting. In the case of "Beatty *v.* Gillbank," which is reported in the IX Queen's Bench Division, page 308, the order for the sureties was quashed by the Court, in a Judgment delivered by Mr. Justice Field, who said—

> "It is quite clear that there is no sort of ground or authority for any action by the Magistrates in interfering with the meeting."

Now, what do these Magistrates do? They are as impudent as if they were Resident Magistrates in Ireland. They are as ignorant of the law as some of the Law advisers of the Government appear to be on the subject of Irish meetings. They claim the right to prohibit the holding of a meeting, and they announce that if the people go to it after the prohibition it will be an unlawful assembly. I regret that I have to condemn the legal gentleman who advised the Magistrates in relation to this proclamation. I regret it because, though I do not suppose he voted for me, it is my duty to defend the whole of my constituents as far as I can. I regret that in Northampton, where we have had some experience of the assertion of the right of meeting, there should be found any lawyer ignorant enough to advise the Magistrates they might issue this absurd proclamation. Magistrates cannot; a Government cannot; nothing but Parliament can make an assembly unlawful, if it be lawful otherwise. Parliament can do anything; it can take a man's rights, and it has taken a great many away in Ireland, but, at any rate, I hope the House will not permit the Magistrates to take away, without the authority of Parliament, what few rights we have got left. I can understand that the learned Attorney General may feel bound to defend these Magistrates, because I believe they are nearly all Conservative Magistrates. Unfortunately, we have had a great many deaths amongst the Liberal and Radical Magistrates in Northampton during the last few years. I am sure the Lord Chancellor only exercises his discretion for the purpose of promoting the due administration of the law, but it is unfortunate that he has found his discretion lie in the direction of gentlemen of his own political views and of worse lawyers than himself. Whatever one would say of the Lord Chancellor's views in other respects, no one would venture to cast any doubt on his views as a lawyer. I ask the Government, once for all, to say to the people who look to them for teaching "The Magistrates have no right to do an illegal thing." If the Government will not protect our rights we must protect them ourselves. I have never hesitated to do it in times gone by, and I will never in the future when the occasion arises, hesitate to do it. It is the duty of the Government not only to give no encouragement to, but to discourage any infringement at all upon the rights of the citizens, whether they agree to the Government in politics or not. But this stopping of the meeting did not save the three wretched clauses giving the publicans compensation; they had to go. I can conceive that those Magistrates who have been recently appointed wished to show their gratitude by doing the best they could to help the Government in their sore dilemma; but they will not do it effectively by prohibiting discussion. I trust that, little as the Leader of the House seems to care for the assertion of public liberty, some of the old traditions of his Party will be respected, and that, without reference to the question whether this is a Motion for adjournment or not, there will be some consideration for the rights and the liberty of the people which is involved in the Motion. If it had not been that the Home Secretary hesitated yesterday and mocked to-day I should not be speaking now. I said he mocked to-day, for he declared he knew nothing of the law of the land in relation to a most important matter affecting his Department. The right hon. Gentleman shakes his head. I do not know what that shake means, but I do know that in answer to my Colleague yesterday he declared that this was an intricate matter of law, when there is no intricacy at all about it. He cannot have referred to the records of the Home Office or he would have found the Paper

upon the Basingstoke disturbances, which was laid on the Table in 1882 by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby. He would have known then that there was some misapprehension, a misapprehension sanctioned by the Law Advisers of the Crown, as to what the rights of meeting were. That might have been a justification for the right hon. Gentleman's ignorance up to the 12th of June, 1882, but on the 13th of June, when the decision in the case of "Beatty *v.* Gillbank" was delivered in the Queen's Bench Division, that ignorance ought to have been swept away. I ask the House not to regard this as a Party question. It is our question to-day; it may be yours to-morrow; and the difficulty is that if the prohibition of discussion rests with the majority of the Justices in one place to-day it will rest with the majority of the Justices in another place by-and-by. The great thing which has kept this country in advance of every other country in Europe, and which has kept it more peaceful, has been the safety valve of public meeting, where opinions might be expressed. I can understand the Government feeling touchy about their Bill just now. A characteristic of a weak Government is that it gets annoyed with things that a strong Government passes by. I appeal to the House to join in saying to the Conservative Magistrates of Northampton, "You have no right to gag your opponents, since free speech has been the deliverance of the land."

(5.57.) MR. C. R. SPENCER (Northamptonshire, Mid): I am not in the habit of intruding myself on the attention of the House, and, therefore, I hope I may be allowed to make a few remarks. I have known Northampton well for many years, and I do not think that, in all that time, it can be proved that Northampton is in the habit of indulging in riots. It was, therefore, with considerable surprise that I saw in the newspapers yesterday morning that the borough Magistrates had prohibited this meeting, especially when I know that the two gentlemen who were to take the chair at the meeting were two of the most law-abiding members of a law-abiding constituency. I venture to think that this was an extremely dangerous thing for the borough Magistrates to have done. I do not care what are the politics of the Magistrates, but it is a dangerous innovation in the practice of this country for the Magistrates to lay down the law like this. On Sundays we are accustomed to hold meetings of different kinds in Northampton, and it is nothing new for large crowds to assemble in the market-place, and, therefore, it is an absurd aggravation of the trouble for the Magistrates to have suggested to the people that they should go to the racecourse. I do not see why they should not have met as usual in the market-place, and I regret that some ill-advised persons should have considered themselves obliged to persuade the borough Magistrates that this temperance meeting should be prohibited. If my hon. Friend goes to a Division, I shall have the greatest pleasure in supporting him, as a protest against what I must call an infringement of the liberty of the subject.

(6.0.) THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): The politics of the Northampton Magistrates have been referred to. For my own part, I have not the slightest idea what their political colour is. With regard to my answer on the question of the meeting, I stated that the Magistrates could not by such proclamation make a meeting illegal, and that the proclamation was only a warning to those about to take part in the meeting that, in the judgment of the Magistrates, it would be an unlawful assembly, and that such warning did not carry with it any penalty. I believe the three statements are perfectly correct. The only difficulty I have in speaking on the subject arises from my imperfect information of the facts. I have no information beyond the telegram I will read to the House.

An hon. MEMBER: Why not? There has been plenty of time to get it; only two and a half hours' journey.

MR. MATTHEWS: The telegram is in an answer to inquiries which I made as soon as the hon. Member's question appeared upon the Paper. Does the hon. Member suggest I ought to have sent down a special messenger to the Magistrates? [*Cries of* "Why not?"] The telegram which I received this afternoon runs—

"Chief Constable received information of organised opposition to meeting. Three bands to parade the town. Magistrates met three o'clock. Made suggestion to promoters that meeting should be held on race course, where it would be possible to check disorder and prevent damage to property. Impossible to do so in Market Square. Promoters declined suggestion, Second meeting of Magistrates at eight o'clock Meeting at Market Square prohibited. Magistrates again offered race course. Great excitement in town. Breaches of peace generally regarded as certain. Magistrates only anxious to keep peace in town."

That telegram is from the deputy Mayor. I am reluctant to express any condemnation of men whose only desire was to maintain order in Northampton; but I must say that the prohibited meeting appears to me to have been called for a perfectly lawful purpose. Criticism of a Government Bill is, of course, perfectly lawful. One hon. Member has spoken as if the acts of these Magistrates had been the act of the Government. I must point out to the hon. Member that the Government have no control whatever over these borough Magistrates, who have acted with good intentions, no doubt, but on a mistaken view of their powers. If the facts, as narrated by the hon. Member for Northampton, are correct, I think there can be no doubt that the Magistrates were wrong in issuing this proclamation. At the same time, I do not think that the case deserves the very strong and emphatic language of the junior Member for Northampton, for it does not appear to me that the Magistrates had any dark design against the liberty of the subject, or liberty of free speech.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Will the right hon. Gentleman excuse me? Will he be good enough to express an opinion upon the proclamation? What I want to know is, whether that was legal?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have said it hardly becomes me to say more than that I do not think the proclamation was justifiable or warranted in the circumstances. The Magistrates appear to me to have acted from a desire to keep good order, but they went the wrong way to work, as far as I can judge. The main outlines of the law relating to meetings are well settled, but there is considerable difficulty in the application of the law. It is the duty not only of Magistrates, but of every subject of the Queen, to prevent an unlawful assembly from taking place, if he can; but it is not always very easy to determine at what point an assembly previously lawful becomes an unlawful assembly. There are moments of excitement which, in some circumstances, may be overlooked, but the border line of danger to the peace is not always easy to discover, even by a calm and impartial onlooker. In matters of this sort there is always some difficulty as to the application of the law, and, for myself, I should always hesitate to attach blame to Magistrates whose intention was good and whose purpose was only to preserve the peace, and who were really persuaded that the peace was likely to be broken; and in this case it appears to me that the Magistrates did not wish to do more than to preserve the peace. So far as I can express an opinion on the facts, it appears to me, however, that they exceeded their powers, and were wrong in the course which they took. Having said so much, I hope the hon. Member for Northampton will agree that there is no great constitutional principle imperilled by the events that occurred at Northampton. Certainly there is none that will be imperilled by any action or word of mine. I hope I have expressed with sufficient fulness my view of the law of public meeting, and I do not think I am called upon to express any further opinion upon the action of the Magistrates. I trust the hon Member for Northampton will be satisfied.

(6.7.) SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I am very glad the Home Secretary has expressed, and I am sure he has with sufficient clearness, his view in reference to this transaction. He has said the proclamation was not justified by law. I cannot agree with him, however, in the belief that there is no great constitutional question raised by this Debate. I think there is. I have no desire to impute any evil motives, or other than good motives, to the Magistrates in this matter, but they have gravely misapprehended the law, there is no doubt. Up to 1882 a different impression prevailed as to the administration of the law by Magistrates acting on the advice of the Home Office, and perhaps, as the matter came under my personal administration, I may refer to this, though, as I have not had the opportunity to refresh my recollection, the House will accept my apology if I am not absolutely

accurate in all particulars. In former times it was a moot point whether a meeting *primâ facie* and *ab initio* lawful could not subsequently be rendered unlawful through the action of people who proposed to disturb it. The point, however, has been set at rest for ever by the decision in the Basingstoke case. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Home Office has no control over the Magistrates in boroughs or counties. This must be understood, for it is the essence of our government that the Executive does not control the Magistrates, and the great complaint of the administration in Ireland is that they do. The independence of the Magistrates of the Secretary of State is to be borne in mind. Though the Magisterial Authorities are not bound to accept the declaration of the Home Office, they are very much disposed to follow the advice which the Home Secretary is in a position to give. Very often, in former times, Magistrates, finding themselves in a difficulty, used to consult the Home Office, and the Home Office consulted the Law officers. For a good many years before I had to do with these matters, Law officers had expressed the opinion that if a breach of the peace was threatened by a counter meeting, then the Magistrates could prevent both meetings. This opinion was acted upon in many instances, for instance, in Liverpool, when there were Orange processions and counter Catholic processions organised, also in Glasgow and elsewhere. Successive Home Secretaries had advised Magistrates so to act. I was consulted by the Basingstoke Magistrates. At Basingstoke, it will be remembered, the Salvationists used to hold meetings every Sunday, and they were attacked by the Skeleton Army, who were practically publicans. The Magistrates of Basingstoke, who had an insufficient number of police at their disposal, consulted the Home Office. This is my recollection of what took place years ago, but the House must take it *cum grano salis.* I gave the advice formerly given to Liverpool, Glasgow, and other places. In these circumstances, the question arose whether the meetings of the Salvationists were lawful; and in June, 1882, in the case of "Beatty *v.* Gillbank," the Court held that the course taken in prohibiting the Salvationists' meetings was not justified by law, and that an assembly lawful in itself did not become unlawful because it was likely to be attacked and interfered with. Since that decision, there has been no further doubt as to the law. I remember at that time I thought it was rather inconvenient, as these difficulties were likely to arise in many places, and, if I recollect right, we sent down a force to protect the original meeting against attack. The law, however, was settled beyond doubt, and I hope, after this Debate, the point will not have to be raised again. I attribute nothing to the Magistrates, except a want of clear understanding of the law so laid down. I do not understand what was the ground of the Magistrates' alarm at Northampton. I am reminded of the story of the man on board ship, who, when a breeze sprang up, asked the captain if there was any fear, and received the reply, "Yes, a great deal of fear, but no danger." If the Publican Party and the Temperance Party agreed among themselves to discuss this matter there was no reason in that why the Magistrates should have apprehended a breach of the peace. There seems to have been an unfounded fear on the part of the Magistrates. This need not be discussed as a Party question; but I hope the discussion will make it clear to Magistrates that if a body of people call a lawful meeting it does not become unlawful because some other body choose to threaten to disturb it.

*(6.16.) THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): It is scarcely necessary for me to intervene at any length, because I am pleased to find myself for once in entire agreement with the right hon. Member for Derby. Before reminding the House that there was no need to make this a Party question the hon. Member for Northampton might have waited until there was some indication of an attempt to make it a Party question; and the only way in which it could be made such would be by suggesting that Her Majesty's Government, or the Home Secretary, were in some way responsible for this act of the local Magistrates. There is, however, no ground for the suggestion that, either directly or indirectly, the Home Secretary or anyone representing the Government had anything to do with the meeting, or in any way endorsed what has been done. The interruptions of the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. J. E. Ellis) seemed to indicate an idea that the Home Secretary was at fault because, on the spur of the moment, he was not prepared with more precise information, but this implies a control of the Home Office which does not exist. As to the state of the law, I understand, as I have formerly stated in the House, that for 40 years the law has been that a meeting called for an illegal purpose, or attempting or threatening to do illegal acts, or causing terror among, or giving reasonable grounds of terror to, persons in the neighbourhood, is an illegal meeting. The passage from the judgment of Mr. Justice Field is practically to the same effect. According to Hawkins's *Pleas of the Crown*, any meeting whatever of a great number of people, attended with such circumstances of terror as may endanger the public peace, or raise fears among the King's subjects, may truly be called an unlawful assembly. I do not know what may have led to the advice given at the time the right hon. Member for Derby was Home Secretary, but I entirely agree with the right hon. Gentleman's exposition of the law, that a lawful meeting does not become unlawful because certain persons express an intention of interfering with it. No ground such as that would make a meet- unlawful; and it is a mistake to be under any such apprehension. Nor does a meeting become unlawful because a Secretary of State, or a Magistrate, or a Public Authority thinks fit to call it so. It depends upon the character of the meeting; it depends upon the real facts of the case, and not upon the opinion of any one individual. In my opinion, taking the facts as stated by the senior Member for Northampton, the proclamation issued was an unlawful proclamation. There were no circumstances to justify the Magistrates in issuing such a proclamation. Whatever might have been their own view of the law, there were clearly no circumstances to justify the issuing of the proclamation.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I did state, quoting from a newspaper, that the Magistrates did have certain evidence submitted to them on affidavit or otherwise.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I have no information on that. But on the statement of the hon. Member for Northampton there was no justification for the issue of the proclamation. Somewhat unnecesarily the junior Member for Northampton introduced the question of there being some distinction in this matter between the law of England and that of Ireland. I know of no such distinction in the law [An hon. MEMBER: Or the practice]—nor in the practice. The law was correctly laid down by my right hon. Friend the Attorney General for Ireland, on the 9th of June in the present year, when he stated that hon. Members who thought otherwise must have in their minds the Crimes Act of 1882, and not the existing state of the law, and that under the present system of coercion, as it is styled, in Ireland the law of public meeting is absolutely identical with the law of public meeting in England. I wish simply to enter my protest against the argument used, which does not bear upon the action of the Northampton Magistrates.

(6.22.) MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): From an Irish point of view it is not to be regretted that this incident has arisen. I have no doubt the Northampton Magistrates in this instance have been led to adopt the course they have taken, and which is now condemned on both sides of the House, simply by studying the answers given in this House by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and by noticing the fact that, across the water in Ireland, where so many things are so much better done than in this country, the law is held to be by the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Executive that it is absolutely within the discretion of Magistrates to proclaim a meeting or not. The Northampton Magistrates naturally thought they were justified in prohibiting this meeting, and possibly expected the same degree of support from the Home Secretary as the Magistrates of Ireland receive from the Chief Secretary. Therefore, I think it is not at all a bad incident, both from the fact that it has given the people of this country a slight touch of what goes on in Ireland, and because it brings into high relief the contrast between the way in which Irish Members are met when they make complaint of arbitrary acts of this kind, and the tone and temper with which similar complaints are met when they are raised in respect to Magistrates in England, who are independent of the Executive, by an English Member. I have no doubt, and never had a doubt, notwithstanding the sneer of the Attorney General that the law in Ireland is exactly the same as the law in England, with regard to this matter. I have no intention of transgressing the Rules of Order by referring to the state of things in Ireland, but as the Attorney General introduced the question I may be allowed to say that what we complain of is not the law but the administration of the law. What we complain of is that we do not get the benefit of the law in Ireland, whereas in this country, from the tone of the Home Secretary and the Attorney General, it is extremely likely that English people will not again very soon be treated in this manner. At the same time, in referring to what has occurred at Northampton, I feel bound to say that I do not take the same roseate view of the situation as right hon. Gentlemen opposite. They gladly welcomed the appeal of the hon. Member for Northampton not to treat this as a Party question, but, although I have not been in Northampton recently, and am not acquainted with local details, I cannot think there is a total want of connection between the fact that the borough Magistrates are supporters of the Government and the fact that the meeting was to be held in opposition to Government policy, and upon what is an extremely sore point to the Government. I must say I think the hon. Member for Northampton has done good public service in bringing this matter under the notice of the House when we consider that it may not be an isolated act, but part of a policy; for did we not see in this Metropolis determined efforts made to break up the procession, and put obstacles in the way of the meeting held in Hyde Park about a fortnight ago, and the same thing, as I am informed, has been done on other occasions. I consider it as part of a policy, an attempt, at a very great distance, and in a feeble way, to imitate the policy of the Irish Executive, by using the power of the Executive in favour of one Party, and in trying to prevent a public expression of opinion against the Government policy, and I think right hon. Gentlemen will find that by the attempt to introduce the methods of Ireland into this country they will not assist their Party and smooth the passage of their Bill in this House. It seems to me a strong and instructive illustration of the truth of the old adage, "Evil communications corrupt good manners." It will be found impossible to carry on a system of persistent repression of public meeting in Ireland and persistent suppression of the right of free speech there without affording people in authority in this country the temptation to meet popular excitement here in times of political crisis by a similar evil action.

(6.30.) MR. LABOUCHERE: As my object in moving the Motion has been entirely fulfilled, I now ask leave to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LOCAL TAXATION (CUSTOMS AND EXCISE) DUTIES BILL.—(No. 244.)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): Mr. Speaker, before we proceed to enter upon the Orders of the Day I think it only right to refer briefly to the very grave and important observations which fell from you a few minutes ago in answer to the hon. and learned Member for Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy). Sir, we cannot be indifferent to any expression of opinion which falls from the Chair on matters of constitutional importance, especially when such opinion is expressed for the guidance and information of the House. It will be the duty of the Government most carefully to consider the observations which fell from you, Sir, in answer to the questions addressed to you; and, in order that we may have time to do so, we do not propose to proceed with the consideration of this Bill this evening. On Thursday I propose to state to the House the course which the Government will take with regard to those provisions of the Bill to which your attention was drawn this evening.

Committee deferred till Thursday.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 284.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's), rising amid cheers, said: I hope I may interpret that cheer as indicative of a general acceptance of the measure of which I am about to move the Second Reading. I do not think that any lengthy recommendation will be necessary of a Bill dealing with the amendment of the law relating to the housing of the working classes. There is a general concensus of opinion that the amendment and consolidation of the law with reference to the housing of the working classes is required, and there is no doubt that a considerable complication of the law on this important subject exists. Even if the law itself were in a satisfactory condition, the fact that the law can only be discovered after a careful study of many Statutes would be a sufficient justification for the Government to undertake the consolidation of the law. The next Bill on the Paper is the Housing of the Working Classes Acts Consolidation Bill, and the Government might have contented themselves with the consolidation of the law, leaving its amendment to be dealt with afterwards. There is much to be said from that point of view; but, on the other hand, most hon. Members will admit that it is much more satisfactory for the Government to present an Amendment Bill at the same time as a Consolidation Bill. If the House gives its assent to the Second Reading of the two Bills, then the most convenient mode of dealing with the question would be to refer both Bills to a Grand Committee, with the instruction that they should be consolidated at once. Looking to the fact that the law is complicated, and to the technical nature of the discussion which will be raised, the machinery of a Grand Committee would be much better adapted to deal with the Bills than a Committee of the whole House. A number of hon. Members specially interested in the matter will be placed on the Committee. I think there is a general concurrence of opinion that the existing law is most difficult, complicated, and obscure, and, if for no other purpose, it is urgently required that the procedure under the Acts now in force should be greatly simplified. To show this I will indicate the mode of procedure under Torrens's Acts from 1868 to 1885, and the procedure proposed by the Bill before the House. Under the former Acts the Medical Officer of Health reported to the Local Authorities if he considered any premises dangerous to health and unfit for human habitation. This Report was referred to the surveyor or engineer, who, in his turn, reported as to the cause of the evil and the remedy for it, and as to whether or not it was possible to put the premises into a fit condition for human habitation. Copies of both Reports had to be laid before the owner of the premises, who might object before the Local Authorities. Supposing the objections were overruled, there was an appeal from the Local Authority to Quarter Sessions, and if the decision there were in accordance with the decision of the Local Authorities, plans and specifications of all the work suggested by the Medical Officer and the surveyor or engineer had to be prepared; and then, again, the owner was allowed to raise objections before the Local Authorities and Quarter Sessions. It is evident that all this machinery has the effect of enormously delaying any action with regard to unhealthy dwellings, and provides a loophole through which many owners of insanitary dwellings escape. It cannot, therefore, be wondered at that the Acts existing are, to a large extent, inoperative. The Bill proposes a much simpler method of procedure. It is made an absolute duty of the Medical Officer of Health to report to the Local Authorities any premises injurious to health and unfit for human habitation; and it is also made the absolute duty of the Local Authorities to order proper periodical surveys to be made of their district, with the view of seeing that the Medical Officer of Health fulfils his duty. In explicit terms the Bill imposes upon the Local Authorities the duty of seeing that there are no unhealthy dwellings in their localities. When it is ascertained that there are dwellings unfit for human habitation, there will arise under the Bill no question of the interference of surveyors, or of the provision by the Local Authorities of plans and specifications of what is wanted to put the premises into repair. The Bill assumes that the owner is wholly responsible, and if the house is declared to be injurious to health and not properly habitable, the owner is bound to find out himself what is to be done, and to do it within a limited time. If the repairs are not undertaken within this limited time, the house may be demolished. Another question dealt with by the Bill is that of obstructive buildings. Some doubt has arisen as to the meaning of the words "obstructive building" in the Artisans' Dwellings Act of 1882. The Bill before the House considerably extends the meaning of the words, and further, gives powers for the forming of schemes which will be intermediate between the larger schemes of the Cross Acts and the smaller schemes of the Torrens Acts. Many areas are not large enough to be dealt with by the Cross Acts, and are too large to be dealt with under Torrens's Acts. The Bill proposes that a Local Authority, when buildings have been declared unfit for human habitation or obstructive, may proceed to take measures, not only for dealing with the obstructive buildings, but to make a scheme taking in some of the surrounding dwellings with the view of the clearing away of courts and alleys, and bringing light and air into the localities so as to make them more fit for human habitation than would be otherwise possible. There is a point in the Bill which I think will render it peculiarly acceptable to hon. Gentleman who represent London constituencies. Great complaints have been made of the unwillingness of Vestries and District Boards of Works to put in force the law with regard to dwellings of this character. I do not think it necessary either to condemn or defend the action of such bodies, but in a town like London every district is interested in the good health of every other district, and the Central Authority ought to have the power to act if they are satisfied that the Local Authorities are neglecting their duty. Therefore, where it is shown to the London County Council that Local Authorities are neglecting to deal with unhealthy areas within their localities, the County Council will have power to take over the duties of the Local Authority. This power has been asked for by the London County Council for good and sufficient reason, as I think, and we are glad to take advantage of the existence of a body representing the whole of the inhabitants of London and to charge them with this particular duty in connection with the various areas which constitute the Metropolis. The Government have also endeavoured to deal with the question of compensation in the Bill. A good many efforts have been made to reduce the amount payable to owners of property which is to be removed because of its unhealthy condition, and I venture to think there is not a Member in the House who will not welcome any fair and reasonable scheme which will cut down to a minimum the money payable to owners of property who grossly neglect their duty in regard to their property. Of course, I draw a wide distinction between this kind of property and houses taken, not because they are in an unsanitary condition, but because they are required in order to make other parts of the district inhabitable. I will, of course, give every reasonable consideration to the case of owners whose property may be required for the improvment of a locality, but I will have no mercy on those owners who allow their property to get into such a condition as to be a danger to the health of a locality. By Clause 15 it is provided with regard to compensation that the arbitrator is to take evidence on three points, first, as to whether the rental of the premises has been enhanced by reason of their being so overcrowded as to be dangerous or injurious to the health of the inmates; secondly, as to whether the premises are in a state of defective sanitation or are not in reasonably good repair; and, thirdly, whether the premises are unfit and not reasonably capable of being made fit for human habitation. I think it will be found that the Government have gone as far as they possibly can in drawing a line in regard to the question of compensation, but I may add that if hon. Members can suggest additional words which will better carry out this object we shall be prepared to accept them. We have also made some provision with the view of reducing the cost of arbitration, and we further provide for the payment to tenants of a reasonable sum, with a view of enabling them the better to obey the order to remove from the condemned and unsanitary premises. We have also thought it right to impose penalties on owners who take part in deliberations with regard to premises in which they are interested. It is, undoubtedly, a great scandal that men should be allowed to decide questions of the kind in such circumstances. I think I have said enough to show that the Government have approached this subject with a view to simplifying and insuring the operation of the law, and I hope the House will reasonably consider the proposal to refer the Bill to a Grand Committee. In this way we hope to make the law more operative, and to take precaution that, as far as London, at any rate, is concerned, the Local Authorities shall be made to do their duty by empowering the higher authority to step in where the Local Authority is in fault. I beg, Sir, to move the Second Reading of this Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

*(6.55.) SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston): I have to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the introduction of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman has said that the law is difficult, complicated, and obscure, but, what is worse than all, the law is practically inoperative. The evil which arises from the defects in the law affects not only great communities like London, but also rural districts. I am glad that the right hon. Gentleman proposes to amend the law as well as to consolidate it. But I think it is to be regretted that this Government, who have been wasting the time of the House in the consideration of the question of the endowment of public houses, should not have earlier brought before the House a Bill which is likely to be of so much more advantage to the community at large. The proposal of the right hon. Gentleman to refer the Bill to a Grand Committee appears to be the quickest way of getting the Bill forward at this period of the Session. I do not think the Bill ought to stop at the demolition of unhealthy houses. There ought to be some provision in the Bill to force the owners to put up other houses, as I think people ought not to be driven from the districts in which

they live. This is especially necessary in rural districts, because it is most undesirable that people should be driven from rural districts into the already over crowded towns. We want to keep them in the country. There ought to be some power compelling the owner where insanitary houses are demolished, to put up other houses in their place, in order to keep the people in the same locality; and I am sorry to see that the clause for the demolition of insanitary houses is not accompanied by some such provision. In some cases the owners of these bad houses prefer to see them demolished, because they say it will not pay them to repair. If cottages are reported to be unfit for human habitation, it should be the duty of the Local Authority to order the building of proper dwellings, either at the public cost or at the expense of the owner. The sum of £350,000 has been mentioned very often of late in this House, and there seems to be considerable difficulty in disposing of it. I would suggest to the Government that they could hardly do a more popular thing than to make it the nucleus of a fund for the better housing of the poorer people in the rural districts as well as in the towns. With regard to obstructive buildings, I think the Government are taking a wise and beneficial course in asking for power to remove obstructions; in most cases, the obstructions are not to be got rid of by little peddling and tinkering arrangements such as have had to be resorted to in the past. The proposal of the Government will be very valuable in decreasing the mortality of the districts in which it is applied. It will enable the authorities to deal with blocks of insanitary dwellings—rookeries as they are called, and which are the centres from which disease spreads. In the crowded parts of the Metropolis, and of other large towns, the mortality is considerably greater than in the parts of towns where there are more open spaces. What we want for the benefit of the younger growing population are open spaces. We want playgrounds for the children nearer the blocks of buildings in which they dwell. Under such a scheme as sketched out in a few words by the right hon. Gentleman a great and salutary reform might be effected in this direction. I hope in the discussion of this Bill in Grand Committee other points may be incorporated which will make this a great measure for the well-being and sanitary improvement of the condition of the people.

(7.2.) SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I wish to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the serener atmosphere in which we find ourselves on this Bill. We are really like storm-tossed wayfarers, struggling through clouds and darkness, and thunder and lightning, and, at last mounting the hill, finding ourselves under the blue sky. Of course, we shall do what we can to assist the right hon. Gentleman to carry this Bill, and, if it needs improvement, to improve it. This and similar measures are useful Bills to occupy the attention of the House of Commons and of the country, and I would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that he should give the preference in what remains of the Session to measures of this character rather than to those of a more controversial nature. I have no objection to controversy myself; I rather like it. But there are times for all things, and the month of July being a hot month is not suited to controversy. When you want to have highly controversial measures it is more convenient to take them in the early part of the Session. Therefore, I hope the Government, in the re-consideration of their position, will remember that besides this there are other measures which are not of a controversial character, but largely beneficial to the country, to which they might devote their energies. That is a course I have long advised. There seems a favourable opportunity of taking that course, and I hope it will be pursued. I have nothing to say upon this Bill except to give my assent to the proposal it makes. I do not imagine that it raises any great conflict of opinion. It is a subject upon which many Gentlemen on both sides of the House have had large experience, having taken great interest in it for many years. They may be able to offer the Government assistance and suggestions of various kinds, and which I have no doubt will be gladly accepted. In that manner I hope a most useful measure will be passed that will be of benefit to all classes of the community.

(7.10.) SIR R. LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.): Sir, I desire to join the two right hon. and hon. Gentlemen who have just addressed the House, in congratulating the Government and my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board in particular, on the Bill which he has introduced with so much ability and clearness. Though the Bill interests all classes of the community, it is especially interesting to Metropolitan Members. There is no part of the country, I suppose, which will derive greater benefit from this measure than will London, where there are "rookeries," the unsanitary condition of which is such that the people living in them have no fair chance of thriving. I join with the hon. Member opposite in especially calling the attention of the Government to the importance of providing under this Bill for the establishment of open spaces or playgrounds for the children of the poor in the more crowded parts of the Metropolis. That is a question which has long attracted the attention of all who live in the Metropolis and who care for the well-being of the people in it. I would venture to suggest to my right hon. Friend that it would be well, for the purpose of elaborating the provisions of the Bill in this and any other particular, if he would consent, whenever this Bill comes to be referred to the Standing Committee on Law, to add to the Committee some of those Metropolitan Members who are especially interested in this question.

*(7.15.) EARL COMPTON (York, W. R., Barnsley): I should like to say, on behalf of the London County Council, of the Housing of the Poor Committee of which I am Chairman, that we welcome the action of Her Majesty's Government with regard to this question. I daresay the House is not aware that the County Council, after due deliberation, approached Her Majesty's Government, and placed before the Home Secretary their views with regard to Torrens' Act. They were received, and their arguments were listened to, and, so far as I can judge, the suggestions then made have been adopted and put into the Bill. Therefore, I wish to express thanks, on behalf of the County Council, for the action taken by Her Majesty's Government. It must be evident to those who have studied the question of dwellings for the poorer classes in London and throughout the country that there exists a kind of chaos in the law which cannot be described. I am well aware that it is usual to complain that the Vestries and Local Authorities have neglected their duty, and that that is the reason why this question has become a burning one. Although I have taken some part in the abuse of certain Vestries and Local Authorities, I have never held them up to public censure, for I cannot blame them for not understanding the very complex law on the subject. I am extremely glad that this Bill is going to be submitted to the Standing Committee on Law. It is much the best plan the Government can pursue, and both the Amendment Bill and the Consolidation Bill should be before that Committee. It would be extremely difficult for the Committee to incorporate the Amendment Bill into the Consolidation Bill until the Amendment Bill has been passed by the House.

*MR. RITCHIE: I have prepared the Consolidation Bill, which will be submitted to the Committee with the Amendments in the Amendment Bill included. The Grand Committee will first have the Amendment Bill, and then it will have the Consolidation Bill.

*EARL COMPTON: I think that will be an excellent plan; but I would point out that until the Amendment Bill is passed, I do not see any particular necessity for passing the Consolidation Bill even this Session. Until we are quite satisfied as to the Amendment Bill, I do not think it would be practicable to pass the Consolidation Bill. The effect of the Amendment Bill is practically to amend Torrens' Act. It does not touch Cross's Act at all. Torrens' Act has been left rather on one side for a long time. The reason of that was that the Local Authorities in trying to enfore it found difficulties. Appeals were carried against them, and nothing was done, and the Act has been more or less a dead letter. I am personally of opinion, having looked into this question, that if we can get this Amendment Bill slightly altered, we shall be able to deal with every small unsanitary area throughout the whole of London within a short space of time. The right hon. Gentleman alluded to the subject of appeal to

Quarter Sessions, and that was one of the subjects brought before the Home Secretary, and it will have to be decided in Grand Committee. In my opinion, the appeal should be to the County Councils, and not to Quarter Sessions, and when the County Council is the Local Authority under the Act, that appeal should be to the Local Government Board. But the important part of this Bill is Clause 2, as to buildings unfit for human habitation. One of the most difficult questions medical officers have to deal with is the definition of the phrase "unfit for human habitation." They have, first of all, to obtain proof that there had been fever or death before they can condemn a building. What I would suggest as a more convenient definition is "unhealthy dwelling." I noticed that that phrase was used by the right hon. Gentleman throughout his speech.

*MR. RITCHIE: That will appear in the Sanitary Law Amendment Bill. The Consolidation Bill and the Amendment Bill will also have some similar definition.

*EARL COMPTON: I hope the right hon. Gentleman will bring forward the Sanitary Law Amendment Bill as soon as possible, and that he will pass it this Session. I am sure the House will be glad to have it so; but Amendments will be required in this Act under discussion, in order to include dwellings which are, or are liable to be, injurious to health. I see, with regard to the Medical Officer of Health, the words allude to the Medical Officer of Health of the district. I think it would be advisable, for London, that "Medical Officer" should mean either the Medical Officer of the County Council or of the district. I wish to point out that this will not be a final solution of the housing of the poorer classes of the Metropolis. I agree that the Bill is a step, and a valuable step, forward, and that it will do an enormous amount of good that has been sought for years past. I am glad to hear the decided views of the right hon. Gentlemen with regard to offenders, not only those who have made a profit out of the poorer classes of property, but the landlords. There are landlords who look well after their tenants in villages, but who neglect their property in London and the large towns. I should be glad if we could bring home

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to these landlords the enormity of their sin and the evil which they have inflicted upon the poorer classes. I do not wish such offenders to be merely fined. I should like to see one of them imprisoned for three or four weeks, for one of the greatest sins a responsible man can be guilty of. I again thank the right hon. Gentleman for having brought in this Bill.

*(7.20.) MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Sir, I noted that the noble Lord said he wished to lock up the unfortunate landlord.

*EARL COMPTON: Not unfortunate.

*MR. BARTLEY: Fortunate, then; though they would not be very fortunate if they were locked up. No doubt some of these men are trading on the misery of the people—are crowding them into unhealthy dwellings and are making large profits. But those who have studied the habits of many of the poorer classes must know that a large amount of the unsanitary condition of the houses they occupy is due to a want of education and knowledge amongst the people themselves. What I am afraid of is that if it goes forth to the world that the responsibility will rest solely with the landlord, you will really, to a certain extent, undermine the interest and personal action of the tenant in respect of maintaining healthy conditions of living. It is difficult to induce these persons to make use of sanitary appliances in the best possible manner. I remember going over a block of property and finding that not only had the sanitary appliances not been made use of, but had been disarranged and put out of order. What I am afraid of is that if you make the penalty on the landlord too severe you destroy the active interest of the tenants in their surroundings. I believe in many parts of London the present state of affairs is most unsatisfactory, notwithstanding the enormous strides of the past few years. But what I wish to point out is that, after all, the sanitary condition of the people depends not entirely on the action of the landlords, nor of persons who are described as house farmers, but also upon the better education of the people, and upon their improved ideas. I should be extremely sorry if any legislation sought to impose the sole responsibility upon the landlord. We should do our utmost to induce the people themselves to improve their sanitary condition, and so elevate their mode of living.

*(7.25.) MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): Sir, the London Liberal Members, of whom I am one, will not pass this Bill altogether without Amendment, though we think it is more than might have been expected from the right hon. Gentleman, who used to think that everything turned upon vices in administration. We think the Bill will be a useful step in social reform. We hope that it will be amended after discussion in Committee. I suppose arrangements will be made whereby in Committee Metropolitan Members will have an opportunity of making suggestions. On that understanding we are thoroughly in favour of the Second Reading of the Bill. We hope in Committee we shall have the attendance of a certain number of lawyers on both sides of the House, because I do think a great improvement could be effected by a simplification of the procedure under the different Acts for the housing of the working classes. My hon. Friend the Member for Dumfries, has made a suggestion which would be valuable if incorporated in the Bill. It is notorious that bye-laws have not been framed under the Sanitary Act of 1866 in many parishes and divisions of the Metropolis. I do not think in this Bill there is any provision as to that point. I do not think the County Council obtains, under Clause 6, powers to make the Local Authority draw up bye-laws under the Sanitary Act. That would naturally come into the Sanitary Law Amendment Bill, and, therefore, it is most important that the Committee should have all these Bills before them at the same time. Nobody recognises more than we do the immense importance of uniformity of administration and unity of control in London. That is what we are wanting. The County Council has hardly been able to do anything for want of power; they have no power to give their Medical Officer of Health, one of the ablest throughout the length and breadth of the land, the supervision over Local Authorities which he demands. I believe a good deal could be done in this Bill to reduce the cost of action. Something would be accomplished if this clause passed into law, to which the right hon. Gentleman alluded and which would prevent some scandals in the administration of the Artisans' Dwellings Act. Still, that would not be sufficient. I can conceive other cases than those enumerated in the clause. I will point out one—it does not contemplate the increased profit to be made by using a house for immoral purposes. There are a great many cases in London which do not fall under the present law, and in which, when the property-owner is bought out, he puts in his pocket money which does not properly belong to him. I hope we shall have no repetition of cases like that of the black spot in Whitechapel, where it was impossible to buy out the owners in consequence of the enormous sums they were able to make because they were putting illicit gains into their pockets. I admit it would be difficult to insert words that would exactly meet these cases; but I think that, with the assistance of the legal ability that will probably be represented on the Committee, we ought to be able to reduce the costs, which is really the great point at issue. The Local Authority will not move as long as they find that 50 per cent. of their expenditure is thrown away, or, worse, goes into the pockets of the owners of unsanitary or evil property of some kind or other. I quite sympathise with some of the District Boards in London, in their unwillingness to do so, though I admit they have shown lamentable apathy in some cases. I believe the Mansion House Council will be prepared to submit to any Committee a good many valuable suggestions, and I have no doubt, considering the valuable work done in the Metropolis, such suggestions will receive due attention. I do not fancy any provision of the Bill will do more good than that which prevents members of Local Boards voting on those bodies when their interests are at stake. I think it may be difficult to carry it out; but it is conceived in the right spirit, and will, I hope, prevent some of those disgraceful scenes which have taken place both in the Metropolis and in the country. I would suggest that all the Bills should be submitted to the Grand Committee, and that, at the same time, there should be a fair representation of the London Members on the Committee. I would

particularly urge that my noble Friend (Earl Compton), who can represent the London County Council in this matter as no other man can, inasmuch as he is the Chairman of the Housing of the Working Classes Committee and should have a place on the Committee. I join in the congratulation which has been offered to the Government, and I do hope that, when these Bills come back to us from the Committee, we shall have some opportunity of carrying them through their final stages.

(7.34.) MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I am delighted these Bills have been introduced, and I am glad to fall in with the arrangement that they should be referred to a Grand Committee. The Consolidation Bill must necessarily be of great utility to all those who have studied this question. Those who are interested in the subject have hitherto had to ramble over a series of Statutes, extending back for 40 years, and many of them overlapping one another, so that it has been very difficult to ascertain what the law on the question really is. Consolidation, however, is not all that is required, and we are pleased to receive the Amendment Bill. I agree with a great deal that is to be found in this Bill, and especially in the part which deals with those persons who have allowed their property to get into an unsanitary condition. For my part, I do not want to subject to penalties landlords who have attempted to do justice to their tenants and whose tenants have neglected the sanitary condition of their houses. The men we want to get at are those who obtain large portions of property in the Metropolis, and simply neglect to do any repairs whatever, having only one object in view, namely, to extract the highest rent they can out of the unfortunate individuals who are compelled to inhabit the houses because they happen to be near their places of employment. These Bills do not do all that is required, and, whilst we accept them as a very good instalment of what is required, we must guard ourselves against any supposition that they do all we think necessary to meet the difficulties of the question of the better housing of the people in the Metropolis. If you want to grapple with the question in a broad and general manner, you must find some means of getting the necessary finance to carry out the improvements, and I do not think it can be done by throwing any more burdens on the unfortunate ratepayers. You must find other sources of revenue. No measure can comprehensively meet the requirements of the case that does not tap sources of revenue that are untapped at the present time—I mean, of course, by dividing rates between owner and occupier and making the owner pay some of the rates for this particular purpose. The hon. Member for North Kensington (Sir R. Lethbridge) made a suggestion as to the provision of playgrounds for new buildings. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) whether something cannot be done in the case of huge blocks of dwellings for providing playgrounds, other than the concrete playground that is generally just a mere forecourt. I have gone over many of these dwellings on a hot summer evening, and have been able to see the unfortunate position in which the people are placed. There is nothing but bricks, and mortar, and concrete, without a bit of green to relieve the eye except such as may have been provided by the people themselves in the shape of window gardening. I think that, wherever these barracks are erected, the companies who erect them ought to be called on to provide something in the way of playgrounds. A man when he comes home has no where outside his house where he can sit in the hot weather, and he is, therefore, driven elsewhere to seek rest and comfort. There is a great moral feature in this question; and I would submit to the right hon. Gentleman that he should make provision for dealing with it on the Grand Committee. But, under any circumstances, I think we should all desire to make the measure as perfect as possible.

*(7.42.) MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): This is about the most satisfactory Bill that the Government have introduced this Session, it is gratifying that Members on all sides are able cordially to support it. We, on this side, are especially able to do so, as the Bill embodies many points that we have consistently urged. It will affect London infinitely more than any other part of the United Kingdom,

and therefore I strongly support the suggestion that London Members on both sides should be fully represented on the Grand Committee. The hon. Member for the Ilkeston Division (Sir W. Foster) regarded the measure from a country point of view, and expressed a fear that by bringing about the demolition of working men's cottages in our villages a large part of our rural population would be driven into the towns. There are, however, provisions in the Bill, as I understand it, which enable the Local Authorities to exercise their discretion in the matter of erecting new working men's dwellings when unsanitary ones are demolished. Therefore, from a London point of view, we not only cordially support this Bill as improving the dwellings of the working classes in London itself, but we also cordially endorse it because we believe it will tend to keep the agricultural population in the country districts instead of driving them into the towns, where their presence has a tendency to bring about overcrowding and a reduction of wages. The principle of the Bill is to give greater power to representative County Councils, as well as to throw greater obligations on them—and I may say it was gratifying to hear the words of cordial appreciation in which the right hon. Gentleman spoke of the work the London County Council has already done in this matter of housing. He can rely upon it that when the opportunity arises, they will do a great deal more in the same direction. We hear a great deal said in disparagement of the London County Council, and constant protests raised against adding to its duties, so that we were glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman's expressions of approval, and his declaration that larger powers should be conferred upon them in the future. One of the chief advantages of this Bill is that it will do a great deal to improve the dwellings of the working classes and to get rid of unsanitary dwellings. It will also impose a penalty on Vestrymen who vote in respect of those questions in which they have a personal or pecuniary interest. I think it is high time that such men should be entirely prohibited from taking any part in the discussion and settlement of these questions. In addition to those points, there is the great and vital question of compensation — a question of "compensation" on which the Opposition can, at least on this occasion, agree with the right hon. Gentleman. This Bill goes farther on this point than any other measure has ever gone. In future, where compensation has to be paid, it will only be assessed and paid on what ought to be the normal rent of the dwelling, and not on the excessive rent obtained through overcrowding. But I agree with my noble Friend (Lord Compton) that this Bill cannot be in any way regarded as a final settlement of the question, because, in addition to compensation, there arises the important question who is to pay when compensation is given. The Bill, indeed, raises, without attempting to settle, the question of the incidence of taxation in reference to the ground landlords and others interested in property in London. So far as the Bill goes, we thank the President of the Local Government Board for it, and we consider that we shall be in a better position to urge our views on the subject of the incidence of taxation, now that these minor questions will have been cleared out of the way.

*(7.49.) Captain VERNEY (Bucks, N.): I have very great fear, lest this Bill, which is evidently intended to be productive of great good, should in the rural districts be fruitless. I am sure, if that proves to be the case, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board will regret it as much as we shall. There is no authority in those districts behind the Sanitary Authority—no power to compel the Sanitary Authority to put their powers into execution. In the case of the Allotments Bill power was given to the Sanitary Authority, who did not put it into operation, and the right hon. Gentleman was obliged to bring in an amending Bill to give an appeal to the County Councils. Well, I will ask the right hon. Gentleman to insert in this Bill a power to enable the County Councils to put pressure on the Local Sanitary Authority if it neglects its work. In our rural districts this is a great question. In Buckinghamshire, for instance, I know of a case where a man and wife and their five children are living in a two-roomed cottage, and the reply made to every attempt to remove them, both by the Local Authority and

the Magistrates is, they have nowhere else to go to. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman, in view of such cases as these to give the County Councils power to require the Local Authority to take action. Then it sometimes happens that the members of the Sanitary Authority are the owners of houses in a disgraceful condition, and, of course, in such a case the Local Authority does not wish to put its powers into force. I know of a case of this kind—I think in Winslow—where the owner of houses which have been reported on again and again is the Chairman of the Sanitary Authority, and under one pretext or another the matter has always been allowed to slide. I would urge the right hon. Gentleman, therefore, to see that someone who is interested in the condition of the labouring classes in our rural districts is put on the Committee to whom this Bill is to be referred.

(7.55.) MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I certainly sympathise with the wish expressed by the hon. and gallant Member who has just sat down, that the country districts should be adequately represented on the Committee to whom the Bill is referred. I, of course, am a Metropolitan Member, and regard the matter from a Metropolitan point of view. Without dwelling on the circumstances under which a Bill detested by the working classes has given place to this measure, which will so considerably advance their interests, I will deal with the plan of the Government itself. I consider that enormous advantage will result from the consolidation of these Acts, and as to the amending portion of the proposal, though I regard it with some satisfaction, my satisfaction is dashed by the fact that the Bill does not contain all it should. The Bill contains some excellent proposals—some being identical with the proposals contained in the Bill produced by the Liberal Members for London. I am glad that the Bill contains proposals dealing with the important point of compensation, because, after all, the question of finance is the key of the position. The main difficulty which has been felt in carrying out the Artisans' Dwellings Act has been the cost incurred, and in the community being required to pay a most exorbitant price for the property necessary to be acquired. I remember that the right hon. Member for West Birmingham a few years ago made investigations into a large number of clearances in various towns, involving an aggregate expenditure of between £2,000,000 and £3,000,000. The right hon. Gentleman found that, with regard to the cost of the property so acquired, the community had paid no less than 17s. per square yard, whereas it was calculated that the real commercial value of the property was only 10s. per square yard. But cases have occurred in the Metropolis in which large and exorbitant prices had been paid for property which had substantially become public nuisances. In one case, that of the Bell Lane area in Whitechapel, the Committee of the County Council recently reported as established to their satisfaction, beyond a doubt, that some owners had deliberately allowed their property to go to rack and ruin in the hope that it would be purchased by the community under these Acts. I rejoice, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman has recognised these evils, and has endeavoured to remedy them. But he has not gone far enough. There is an important omission in the Bill—the failure to alter the incidence of the cost. Parliament has gone as far as it reasonably can in piling up rates on the occupier, and the right hon. Gentleman ought to have taken steps, where large blocks are concerned, to see that the burden is shared by the owner. While joining in the chorus of congratulation which has been offered to the right hon. Gentleman, I hope that the Grand Committee to which the Bill is to be referred will carry the reforms much further than is proposed in the Bill.

(8.0.) MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I must express my gratification at the introduction of this Consolidation Bill. One of the reasons why the Acts have not been put in operation in various parts of the country is the inability of the Local Authorities to construe them. The simplification of the law is in itself a great mending of the law, and there I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that we on this side of the House will do all we can to secure the passing of this Bill. There is one clause of the Bill to which attention has not yet been called; it is a clause of the very first importance, namely, Clause 18. I imagine there is a mis-print in the description of the clause. The marginal title is "Compensation to weekly tenants for expenses of removal." I am very happy to say there is not the same restriction in the clause itself, for the clause provides that if the house, or part of the house, of a tenant whose contract of tenancy is for less than a year is required by the Local Authority a reasonable allowance on account of the expenses of removing may be made to the tenant. I think many persons will be grateful to the right hon. Gentleman and to the Government for bringing in a clause to prevent injury being done to persons who are forcibly as it were removed from their tenancies. Some hon. Members have referred to the difficulties of clearing the rookeries of London and other great towns. The difficulties in regard to such clearances have been very small indeed. Numerous areas have been cleared in London and in other towns within recent years. The difficulty has never been to clear the areas, but to provide other dwellings for the people. That is just the very point on which the right hon. Gentleman has done something and will do something to remedy the evils complained of. All the clauses are steps in the right direction. Some of my hon. Friends have referred to the fact that these proposals are only steps. I am not altogether dissatisfied with them as steps. So much will have to be done presently with regard to this question that it would be a false step on the part of the Government to attempt too much at the present time. Considering the size and population, we need some special arrangement with regard to the housing of the poor in London. One of the reasons why the Acts have not been carried out in the past is the condition of the leasehold system. The right hon. Gentleman could not deal with the leasehold system in this Bill with any chance of carrying his proposal this Session, and, therefore, I am content to see the leasehold question left over until a future Session, or possibly until a future Parliament. But, after all, I hope this Bill will be amended in some directions by the Committee to which it will be referred. I presume it will be perfectly competent for the Committee to extend the scope of the Bill, although I hope the Committee will not do anything to prevent the possibility of the Bill becoming law. I welcome this as a step in the right direction, and will give the Bill every assistance, even though the passing of the Bill may give some *kudos* to Her Majesty's Government. (8.10.)

(8.39.) MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg) rose——

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

(8.42.) MR. WADDY: I desire, in the first instance, to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman upon having to pilot a Bill as to which he will not meet with that opposition or obstruction of which we have heard so many lamentations during the Session. I congratulate him upon a piece of useful legislation, which will commend itself to the House. The Bill has a very good and great object, and appears to be extremely well drawn; but I cannot help thinking there is one want in it, namely, a want of sufficient provision for the origination of complaints. In large towns, whenever there is a state of things that calls for remedy there is pretty sure to be a complaint, public comment, and application of remedy; but it frequently happens in the country that those who ought to be the first men to start an inquiry under the Acts are the very persons who are largely interested in the maintenance of the *status in quo*. Now, I venture to suggest that the arrangements which are made here, though desirable, so far as they go, are not quite sufficient. I am not going into anything of the nature of a clause criticism, but it will be observed that under the Bill, before the Local Authority can act, an official representation has to be made to them by their officer—a man who probably owes his position, in the way of personal and private practice, to the very people it would be his duty to attack. The Medical Officer of Health, who has to make an official representation as to the insanitary condition of any property, will probably have his most lucrative private practice among the people who may be the owners of the property over which he ought to exercise supervision, and which he might be called upon to condemn. There ought to be some provision for putting the law into operation whether the Medical Officer of Health does his duty or not.

*MR. RITCHIE: The hon. and learned Member will observe that under Clause 10 it is specially provided that the Report of the Medical Officer of Health for any county is to have the same effect in any district as the Report of the Medical Office af Health for that district.

MR. WADDY: I am fully aware of that, and, moreover, there is a subsequent provision with regard to anybody sending a Petition or representation, but I am very doubtful whether that will meet the case. I am not speaking in any spirit of antagonism to the provision, for I am extremely anxious that the Bill should go through and receive such improvements as may be desirable in Committee. I would point out that both the Medical Officer of the county and of the district, who may in many instances be the same person, are not quite sufficient. I am doubtful whether the Medical Officer of either district or county, singly or jointly, would be able to take the necessary action in some cases, and I would therefore suggest that there should be power to obtain a report from an independent person appointed by the Local Government Board to investigate all complaints and put the Act in motion. How far in the long run this may be found necessary I am not prepared to say, but it seems to me there is some little want in the Bill here with all its varied excellencies to ensure that where mischief exists it shall not escape notice and remedy. I wish the right hon. Gentleman good speed with his work, which, I am sure, will do a great deal more good sanitarily and morally than the extinguishing of a great number of licences.

*(8.48.) MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): There are a few questions I desire to ask, but first I wish to express my satisfaction, as a county Member, with the 13th clause, which, I understand, largely extends the powers of Rural Sanitary Authorities, and gets rid of two or three stages of procedure, and I wish to express still more strongly the satisfaction that all Members with only the most superficial acquaintance with the subject must feel at the compensation provisions in Clause 15. In relation to this clause I wish to ask a question. Its object is to prevent owners of unhealthy premises to make a profit out of allowing houses to fall into decay and become unfit for human habitation. I take that to be the pith of the clause. I notice that by the 32nd line of the 3rd schedule that the 4th section of the Act of 1885 is struck out, and the question I wish to ask is this. The 4th section of the Act of 1885 is the section which says that the owners of any premises who are required by the Local Authority under the Act of 1868 to execute any works or to demolish any premises shall cease to have the power to require the Local Authority to purchase such premises. I admit I have but a brief acquaintance with the Bill, but I should like to have an explanation whether the 15th clause does really cover all the cases as to which this 4th section ot the Act of 1885 was directed, whether it absolutely bars owners from the power of forcing Local Authorities to purchase their premises. With regard to this Bill and also the Consolidation Bill, to which I understand the opening remarks of the right hon. Gentleman also had reference, I much regret that the Government have not seen their way to have a more complete clearing of the decks and more thorough-going legislation. The Rural Sanitary Authorities are, as a rule, disinclined to exercise the limited powers conferred upon them, and the complexity of the two Bills will furnish them with an excuse for inaction. The 7th section of the Act of 1885 declared the duty of Local Authorities to enforce all sanitary laws and put them in force as occasion arose, to secure the proper sanitary condition of premises within the area of their jurisdiction. But that Act became a dead letter in country districts from the fact that there was no proper power to compel Local Rural Sanitary Authorities, the Boards of Guardians, to carry out the sanitary powers they have. That is the cardinal defect of the whole of this class of legislation. The President of the Local Government Board may take credit for passing the Local Government Act of 1888, and I really think this question ought not to have been touched without bringing it within the sphere of the legislation of 1888, without investing County Councils with those sanitary powers with which it was sought to invest them under the original

proposals of 1888. The right hon. Gentleman may remember that some of us made earnest protests against the withdrawal of the schedule, and offered to sit any length of time for the purpose of investing County Councils with control over unsanitary dwellings and unhealthy areas in the counties. I wish to insist as a County Member on the fundamental defect of this legislation, that we have these County Councils, the obvious authority standing over the Rural Sanitary Authorities, who might put the whole machinery in motion for making villages healthy and carrying out sanitary improvements, and yet these County Councils are excluded from taking action. There is one comment I would make both upon this Bill and the other Bill, which is not technically before the House. The first and second parts of the Consolidation Bill are of very great value; but it seems to me—I do not know how far it can be carried out—but it seems to me a great pity that the rural districts are excluded from those parts dealing with unhealthy areas and unhealthy premises. One further question I should like to ask. The Bill fixes the interest on loans at 4 per cent.; and I should like to know whether that conflicts with the power given under the Act of 1885 to the Public Loan Commissioners to lend money at £3 2s. 6d. per cent. No Bill of this kind can be satisfactory which does not supply, especially for rural districts, a better financial basis for carrying out a thorough programme of sanitation. It would be well if a substantial source of revenue could be set apart for this purpose. I should suggest that part of the Probate Duty or part of the Inhabited House Duty might well be applied to these purposes. While offering these criticisms, I express my thanks to the Government for what is done by Clauses 13 and 15 of the Bill.

(9.0.) MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): There is no desire in this part of the House among any of my Friends to continue discussion beyond the present point. I am very glad to see that, amid the clash of opposing interests and conflict of Party opinion, this House is able to deal with the conditions of life of the most miserable—the poorest—of our people. No doubt, as the right hon. Gentleman has said, this measure affects London in particular, and to an extent incomparably greater than the rest of the country. It affects the poorest of the people of London, and it deeply affects the social condition of England, and more particularly of the Metropolis. Everyone who knows anything of the conditions of the housing of the great masses of the population, and of the miserable and un-Christianlike condition of the masses of the population, must be impressed by the necessity that some action should be taken as soon as possible by this House to deal with the evil. I congratulate the President of the Local Government Board on the introduction of the Bill. But why does not the right hon. Gentleman go to the root of the matter, and give a right of action by the tenant against the landlord or owner of unsanitary property? Metropolitan Members on this side of the House have no desire to overload the Bill with Amendments. While we feel that it falls short of the necessities of the case, we believe that, as far as it goes, it may be made a useful measure. It will be our endeavour to assist the Government as far as we can in making it a useful and workable measure. There are two points, however, which, though they have been previously referred to, I wish to impress on the right hon. Gentleman. The first is that of re-erection, the provision of accommodation for those people who are turned out of unsanitary houses. One of the greatest difficulties in dealing with the question of unsanitary dwellings has arisen through the failure to provide this accommodation adequately; in fact, it has contributed to overcrowding in many parts of the Metropolis. I would strongly recommend the right hon. Gentleman to accept, in Committee, at any rate, the principle of the 1st section of the 8th clause of the Housing of the Working Classes (Metropolis) Bill, introduced by myself and others, and which provides that no houses shall be pulled down except on the score of safety unless provision shall first have been made by the County Council, to the satisfaction of the Local Government Board, for housing decently all the occupants. We desire that re-erection shall go on *pari passu* with pulling down. The other point of importance I wish to refer to is that of legal examinations. That question has been dealt with in a Bill introduced by myself and my colleagues, and also in a measure introduced by the hon. Member for Dumfries (Mr. R. T. Reid). In the 7th section of the Housing of the Working Classes (Metropolis) Bill there are provisions whereby the cost of acquiring unsanitary property may be very considerably reduced. There is no doubt that the series of arbitrations which have to be gone through under the existing law is a very great cause of the cost of acquiring such premises. The 16th clause of the Bill meets the question to some extent, but not sufficiently; and I hope the Government will be prepared in Committee to accept some modification of the clause, with a view to make it of a more operative character. Attention has been frequently drawn to the importance of making others than the ordinary ratepayers bear a share of the legal expenses, and I am sorry the point has not been considered by the right hon. Gentleman. I am aware of the difficulty of the problem, but I am certain that the housing of the poor of the Metropolis will never be adequately dealt with until the question of who is to pay the cost is also considered—until property which now escapes is made to contribute towards the local rates. I state this as the mature opinion of those who act with me on this side of the House, and, while welcoming this Bill, I say it will not be a solution of the question, because it does not deal also with the question of local rates. With these remarks, and having warned the Government that this question is not settled by this Bill, I give my hearty support to the measure; and I am sure my colleagues of the Metropolis will join me in doing all that is possible in facilitating its adoption.

*(9.12.) MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I think the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board has reason to be satisfied with the tone in which the Bill has been received, and I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will have assistance from both sides of the House in endeavouring to make it a useful and an efficient measure within the limits laid down by the right hon. Gentleman himself. I think he may rest satisfied that if the Bill goes to a Grand Committee upstairs it will be received in the spirit in which it ought to be received, and that we may hope to make it a good and effective measure. As to the first part of the Bill amending the Torrens' Acts, I have always been of opinion that from those Acts there is more to be hoped for than from Lord Cross's Act. I have always thought that if the provisions of the Torrens' Acts were efficiently worked, they could be made effective without great cost to the Local Authorities. Hitherto the obstacle to the working of those Acts and Lord Cross's Act has been the fear entertained by the Local Authorities of the expenses involved, and I am glad, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman has done something in this Bill to grapple with this difficulty. I had at first some doubt as to whether it was wise to give so great an appeal to the London County Council; but after this discussion, I am obliged to admit that I think the course proposed is a wise one. I am not sure that it will not render some of the Local Authorities unwilling to exercise these duties, and make them inclined to leave to the London County Council the whole of the work; but, on the other hand, there are patent and strong arguments in favour of giving an appeal to the London County Council, and I think we should risk the danger I refer to. With regard to the other part of the Bill, that which deals with the Artisans' Dwellings Act, although the Amendments of the right hon. Gentleman are in the right direction, I do not believe that they will give full effect to those Acts. The real difficulty in working them is the enormous expense of compensation, due in part to the legal costs, and in part to the large compensation which the arbitrators are in the habit of giving, and also the large compensation to which persons are entitled under the law as it now stands. I am bound to say the Amendments do not go far enough as to materially reducing the cost, and I am afraid we must look forward to very little work being done in the future as in the past. My own impression is that the matter must be dealt with in the future in some larger and bolder spirit. We must regard these clearances of unsanitary areas more in

the nature of town improvement schemes than clearances for the purpose of forming sanitary areas. We must take example by Birmingham and other large towns, and re-consider very carefully the whole question of compensation with respect to improvements of this kind. I must refer to the familiar subject of the Betterment Clauses. It will be necessary to incorporate, in schemes of this nature, the principle of betterment, under which a property will be made to contribute in proportion to the increased value attaching to them from improvements. However, I do not think it would be wise to raise this question in connection with this Bill. It will have to be left to be dealt with hereafter in a broader and wider scheme when the House will have more time at its disposal. It would, perhaps, be a mistake to encumber the present discussion by raising the point. The main improvement which will be effected will be under the first portion of the Bill. I am satisfied that it will be possible to effect considerable improvement, and quietly and without much expense to promote a more efficient action of the Local Authorities in more closely applying the law as it now stands and will be amended by the Bill. I agree with the last speaker that we shall have to consider the whole question of the incidence of taxation, and I hope that that subject will not be lost sight of by the right hon. Gentleman, whom, meanwhile, I beg to thank for introducing this Bill.

*(9.18.) MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I desire to join in thanking my right hon. Friend for the Bill, which will bring the law into a more intelligible state. At present it is almost impossible to obtain a clear grasp of the whole subject. On one occasion I myself endeavoured to master the Statutes bearing on this matter, and I found that it was necessary to obtain a knowledge of 30 Statutes dealing with the question, and that even then I should not have exhausted the list of Acts which would have to be consulted. It must be clear to everyone that a law which is contained in 30 or 35 Acts must be practically inoperative. From my experience of different towns, I believe the problem in the larger towns—putting London aside for the moment—is by no means insoluble. I believe that the unsanitary areas are by no means large, and that at no great cost these areas can be brought into a sounder and more sanitary state. One danger I fear—the trusting too much to rates, and thus driving away private enterprise. We know that in the matter of education the application of the rates in some instances has driven away voluntary effort, and I trust we shall not expect too much assistance from the rates in the matter of workman's dwellings; for if we do we shall drive away private capital, and not have that increase of improved houses for the poor which everyone desires to see. This question is by no means simple. It has many sides, and we should not rely on the public purse alone. We shall act wisely, I believe, if we look to private enterprise to do for dwellings for working people that which in other branches of the business of the country is done far more efficiently by that means than by recourse to the public funds. I rejoice that there is nothing said about the incidence of taxation, for that is a most complicated question, the interests involved being so many and diverse. My object in rising was to thank the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board for what he has done and to assure him that his efforts will be welcomed by all who have at heart the interests of the working classes.

(9.25.) MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): I congratulate the Government on having departed in this Bill from the evil practice of omitting all reference to Ireland in beneficial Acts of Parliament. The Bill will be a most valuable improvement in the law relating to this subject, and will probably prove more or less effective in sucuring the objects for which it is brought in. The Bill, however, proposes to repeal the 4th section of the Act of 1885, and I think a very strong case will have to be made out before we repeal that section. I take some objection to the Bill, because it patches up and amends an expensive and troublesome system. If it were practicable to introduce it, I should very much prefer some Bill which would once for all abolish the existing system, and provide something more simple and rapid, and less expensive. I admit that when you come to deal with the question of property and the transfer of land, that object is very difficult to obtain, but, neveltheless, I think that something should be done towards this object. May I make a suggestion on that point to the right hon. Gentleman? We have in Dublin more than one company for the improvement and provision of artisans' dwellings. These companies are ordinary limited liability companies; but by their Memoranda of Association the members agree to take no greater dividend than 5 per cent., and I think it would be well to give to such companies a certain *locus standi* to take on themselves compulsory power to acquire insanitary dwellings, and deal with the sites on commercial principles. These companies have reserve funds, and would, no doubt, be more than willing to apply those funds to the purchase of unsanitary sites in the way I mention. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board whether he could not devise a system, under which, with certain safeguards, these companies could be allowed a *locus standi*. The Bill throws on Local Authorities the duties connected with the acquisition of land, and I do not see why that duty should be thrown upon them, if you can, by means of a Bill of this kind, get those who would be willing to undertake the duty. The second point I desire to mention is the difficulty of making any system of this sort self-working. In the districts where improvement is most wanted you will find the owners of the unsanitary property get themselves elected to the Local Board, where they can bring such influence to bear as to impede the working of these improvement schemes. I know instances where they have combined to prevent anything being done. I submit that the solution of this question is very easy. I deny altogether that a man has a right to make a profit out of what is a danger to the public. I deny that he has a right to crowd human beings in the most unsanitary and frightful dens, and risk the spread of infection for the benefit of his own pocket. I recollect in one district in Dublin, happily acquired by the Corporation, where out of three houses there was an average of 20 cases of typhus fever every year. I submit that the solution of the difficulty is to deprive the owner of the power of making profit out of such a condition of things by inserting a clause which will make it a good defence on the part of the tenant to a demand for rent that the house is not fit for habitation. You in that way deprive the landlord of his profit. You compel him for the sake of his own pocket to repair the premises. All you want is not any arbitrary or harsh method, but the interposition of the Courts of Law—I mean the County Courts and the Justices Courts. I do not make that suggestion as an alternative to the Bill; I do not believe it would be a proper alternative. But I think you will find that, under the Bill, the question of expense will always be before the authorities, and that will prevent them 99 times out of 100 taking action; but if the rent is not paid because of the unsanitary condition of the property, then it immediately becomes the interest of the owner to put it into a proper state of repair.

*MR. RITCHIE: I hope the House, with whose indulgence I speak, will permit me to express my gratitude to hon. Members in all parts of it for the extremely kind and cordial reception they have given the proposals of this Bill. It is not the least satisfactory point of the case that the hon. Member for South Kilkenny has, with regard to the provisions dealing with Ireland, also expressed himself on the whole in favour of the proposals of the Government, believing they will be productive of considerable good to Ireland. There are hon. Members who very much desire that the Bill should go further, and I greatly appreciate the attitude which they have taken up with regard to this Bill. I know there are a great many hon. Members who desire that other questions of great interest affecting the dwellings of the working classes should be dealt with, but they have recognised, and no one more fully than the hon. Member for Bethnal Green, that it would be undesirable to complicate this simple question with many difficult problems. For instance, the question of the division of rates between the owner and the occupier, the question of betterment, and many points of that description, are extremely interesting and most important. Hon. Members recognise that an attempt to have dealt with questions of that kind would only have resulted in our being unable to deal with this part of the subject. It has been recognised, and with great force, that whatever is to be done for the better housing of the working classes should be done quickly, rather than that we should wait for some great general reform in connection with the rates and with the incidence of taxation, which remain to be dealt with, and perhaps in the remote future. Now I will proceed to deal with some of the questions put to me. The hon. Member for North St. Pancras was rather anxious that the Committee should have before them the Bill dealing with sanitary reform in the Metropolis. The reform and consolidation of the public health and sanitary laws in the Metropolis formed part of our programme at the commencement of the Session. And one of the first duties which I set myself in the beginning of the present year was to draw up a Consolidation Bill. But I thought it advisable that we should have the advice of the various Local Authorities in the Metropolis, as well as of the London County Council, and I, therefore, sent round to the whole of the Local Authorities throughout London our proposed Consolidation Bill for the Metropolis. Unfortunately, the replies were a very long time in being returned. There were matters requiring very much consideration, and I do not mean to complain; but it is not long since we received the last of the representations made by the Local Authorities, and we have hardly had time to draw up and amend our Bill in sufficient time to put it before the Grand Committee. I think it would be unfortunate if there were to be any delay in dealing with the Consolidation Bill and the Bill for the amendment of the Sanitary Laws of the Metropolis. I have not entirely lost hope that I shall be able to deal with the question this Session, and I hope the House will not consider that we are in any way departing from our engagements because of the delay caused by the Local Authorities taking a long time to send in their replies. It was suggested by the noble Earl (Earl Compton) that we should not press the Consolidation Bill this year; but I should be greatly disappointed if this Bill did not come out from the Grand Committee both amended and consolidated; and whatever may be the composition of the Committee to which these Bills are referred, I can assure the House no effort will be wanting on the side of the Department to put the Bill in such a position as will enable both branches of the subject to be dealt with, so as to present to the House for their consideration the entire Bill amended and consolidated. It has been urged upon me that the Metropolitan Members should be fairly represented upon the Grand Committee to which these Bills are to be referred. I myself, as a Metropolitan Member, am most anxious that this should be so, because the measures will affect the London more than the country districts. I must, however, point out that the nomination of the members of Grand Committees does not rest with the Government, but with the Committee of Selection of this House, who, I have no doubt, will make a fair selection of members to serve upon it. The hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (Captain Verney) has reminded me that this is a question which is not solely applicable to the Metropolis and other towns, but the hon. and gallant Member knows that we are taking steps in this Bill with a view of doing what we can for the rural districts. It is, perhaps, to be regretted that the House took the course it adopted with regard to the Allotments Bill, whereby it almost deprived the Government of any power to set up the County Council as the authority over the smaller towns and the rural districts. We were strongly urged on that Bill not to make the County Council a Court of Appeal from the Local Authorities in those districts in regard to allotments, and it is, therefore, upon this House that the responsibility devolves. Of course, it will be a matter for the Committee to consider whether some modification may not be made in this principle as affecting the rural districts. There are some minor points that have been referred to in regard to matters of detail which I will not now deal with, because I consider they will be much more effectively discussed in Committee. In conclusion, I have only once more to express my cordial thanks to hon. Members on both sides of the House for the kind and cordial reception they have given to this measure, and to express a hope that with their assistance it may, with such Amendments as the House may determine, be speedily passed into law.

*(9.50.) MR. STANSFELD (Halifax): I think the House will be satisfied with the introduction of these measures, and with the spirit in which they have been brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman. We have heard from him that he has experienced great difficulty in regard to the question of giving an appeal from the Local Authorities to the County Councils. I wish to say in regard to that question that I have always been in favour of an appeal to a higher authority where an appeal is necessary, because I hold that that is a material part of the Local Government structure, but I do not place too much reliance on appeals. I am disposed to place far greater reliance on the efficient performance of their duties by the Local Sanitary Authorities in dealing with these matters. We are, I think, agreed that the existing Sanitary Authority is not an entirely satisfactory Authority. The right hon. Gentleman knows the reason why. The reason is that its sanitary functions are subordinated to the execution of its Poor Law functions, so that the sanitary functions occupy the second instead of the first place. What is wanted is that there should be areas constituted under Local Government Authorities, whose first duty would be to attend to the sanitary conditions of their districts. For this purpose we must have District Councils, and on this subject we on this side of the House, and I hope also those on the other side of the House, are exceedingly anxious for the introduction of a measure to complete the Local Government Act of 1888. I trust and desire that before long we may proceed with a measure constituting these District Councils, and I venture to say that no measure would be more favourably received on this side of the House. With regard to the Consolidation Bill, two opinions have been expressed on this side of the House. For myself, I agree with the opinion that the Consolidation Bill ought to be regarded as of the first importance, and I do not see in the tone and temper of the House any reason to apprehend difficulty in the incorporation of both Bills—the Consolidation and the Amendment Bill—in one measure. Undoubtedly consolidation is practical amendment, because the law has become so difficult to understand, administer, and apply that consolidation has become a matter of absolute necessity. I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the introduction of these measures, which I have no doubt will be to some extent improved by being submitted to a Grand Committee.

*(9.59.) MR. KNOX (Cavan, W.): There are one or two matters to which, without detaining the House at any length, I desire to call attention. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board has said that dealing with this subject in a necessarily incomplete way, it is not desirable to enter upon the discussion of principles which many Members on this side of the House would gladly see introduced. There is, however, one point within the limits so laid down to which I should like to call attention. In Clause 8 of the Amendment Bill a provision is introduced for the simplification of the mode of levying expenses incurred under these Bills. Hitherto such expenses might be levied by various rates. Henceforth they can only be levied by one rate. The clause aims at an evident improvement, but in its present form, perhaps, tends rather to jeopardise a valuable provision of the later Acts, which I think might, with advantage, have been applied to all the sets of provisions for the bettering of the housing of the working classes. It is well-known to the House that the principle of betterment has already been applied in one part of the legislation on the subject of the housing of the working classes—I mean that part which deals with obstructive buildings. Under Section 48 of the Consolidation Bill, if the demolition of an obstructive building adds to the value of the neighbouring buildings, part of the expense may be cast by the arbitrator on the owners of those buildings. That is an application of the principle of betterment which I think simpler and better than that contained in the clause dealing with betterment in the London Bill recently discussed in this House. Having taken some pains to gather the effect of American legislation on the subject, I may say I think the mode in which the betterment principle is applied in the section I refer to is more in accordance with American precedents than was the rather curious proposal of the London

County Council. I cannot, however, in the least, see why this provision should be applied only to obstructive buildings. By the Amending Bill the Government proposes to apply the rating provisions hitherto applicable only to certain classes of improvements under the Artizans Dwellings Acts to all improvements under the Acts now to be consolidated. Might not the principle of betterment in the same way be applied generally by the very simple means of making the provision in Section 48 of the Consolidating Bill applicable, not only to obstructive buildings, but also to unhealthy areas, and all other nuisances removed under these Bills? In many cases the deterioration in the value of surrounding property, caused by the existence of unsanitary houses, is extremely large; and surely in such instances it would be well that some part of the expense of removing those houses should be put on the owners of the surrounding property. I understand, from the Memorandum attached to the Consolidating Bill, that it is not anticipated that it will be necessary to insert in the Amendment Bill any provision dealing with the question of registration of charges under the Land Charges Registration Act, 1888. I venture to express the opinion that the same reasons which weighed with the Court in determining that charges under Section 150 of the Public Health Act could not be registered under that Act will apply in the case of charges under the Bills we are now discussing. In each case the charges are not the result of agreement, but are imposed by authority. It seems to me, therefore, to be desirable that some provision for the registration of these charges should be inserted in this Bill.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, &c.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACTS (CONSOLIDATION) BILL.

(NO. 285.) SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

*(10.7.) MR. CHANNING: I cannot agree with some of the remarks that fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) as to the way in which the principle of consolidation is carried out in this Bill. I think it would have been far better if we had had a great many of the old Acts put into the waste-paper basket, and have had them replaced by a much simpler measure. The first part of this Bill deals with unhealthy areas, and the second part with unhealthy dwellings. These two parts contain a great deal of useful machinery, which would enable much good to be done in rural as well as in Urban Sanitary districts, and I must protest against the exclusion of the rural districts from participation in the benefits of many of these provisions. I allude especially to the provisions in regard to the question of compensation where land is taken compulsorily. In Urban Districts land can be bought without any extra value being added in respect of compulsory purchase, and that should be extended to Rural Districts also. I think the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) is losing a great opportunity in not extending those provisions to the Rural Sanitary districts. Part of the Act of 1885 is very rightly introduced into the third part of the Bill; and in the 56th section we find that the expression "cottage" may include a garden of not more than half an acre, providing that the estimated annual value does not exceed £3. It really is monstrous to say that we have not unhealthy homes and areas in the villages of England. Anyone acquainted with the condition of many villages in the Midlands must know that in that part of England—and I believe the same may be said of Dorset and Wiltshire—there are some very unhealthy areas to which the first and second parts of this Bill might very well be applied. The question is, why Rural Sanitary Authorities should not have the same advantages as Urban Sanitary Authorities in regard to the compulsory purchase of land for clearing away unhealthy buildings. I really think this is a blot in the Bill, and that the right hon. Gentleman has lost a valuable opportunity of providing facilities for the removal of the rookeries which are to be found in a great many of our villages.

*(10.14.) MR. RITCHIE: The hon. Gentleman will observe that the Bill is purely a Consolidation Bill, and not an Amendment Bill at all. It merely puts into one Bill the various enactments which now deal with the subject. The matters to which he has referred may be very fairly considered in connection with the Amendment Bill, but are hardly relevant to the present measure.

(10.15.) MR. JAMES ELLIS (Leicestershire, Bosworth): I should like to emphasise what my hon. Friend has said. It is undoubtedly the case that in many places in the provinces there are blocks of houses which ought to be swept away. They are chiefly the productions of speculative builders.

*(10.16.) SIR WALTER FOSTER: There is no power vested in Rural Sanitary Authorities to obtain land compulsorily for the purposes referred to, and I would put it to the right hon. Gentleman whether it would not be possible to consider the matter, with a view of removing this grievance in the other Bill? It is equally important in rural as in urban districts that we should obtain the best sanitary areas for the people; and I trust that the flaw having been pointed out, the Government will give us a promise to deal with the matter at some future stage of the Bill.

*(10.17.) MR. RITCHIE: If the hon. Member will read Clause 13 of the Amendment Bill he will find that the proposals in the Bill are, to some extent, applied to rural districts. There is no reason why the provisions applying to Urban Sanitary districts should not be applied to rural districts, and the matter will, no doubt, be considered by the Select Committee.

(10.18.) MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): Might I ask whether the Standing Committee on Law, to which this Bill is to be referred, will undergo some alteration with a view to the consideration of this Bill? There will, probably, be upon that Committee an excess of Members who were principally concerned in the Light Railways Bill of last Session. On this occasion I trust there will be upon it a considerable number of Irish Members representing Irish urban districts, seeing that this Bill will affect the cities and large towns of Ireland—where it is to be hoped it will have considerable effect. I hope that in considering the question of the constitution of the Committee the claims of the Irish Members to adequate representation will be considered.

*(10.20.) MR. RITCHIE: This is a matter for the Committee of Selection and not for me; but, no doubt, due consideration will be given to all the interests concerned.

(10.20.) MR. M. J. KENNY: I would remind the right hon. Gentleman that the claims of Scotland will also have to be considered, as the Bill will affect many districts in Scotland, rural as well as urban.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Committee on Housing of the Working Classes Acts Amendment Bill.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee, that they have power to consolidate the two Bills into one Bill.

ALDERSHOT ROADS BILL.—(No. 298.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

*(10.22.) THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The object of this Bill—which is one of very small scope—is to give power to divert certain roads and tracks which have become dangerous from their proximity to rifle ranges at which it has become necessary to stop shooting until the diversion can be effected. I have been in communication with several Members respecting the provisions of the Bill; and the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) has requested that a plan showing exactly what is proposed to be done shall be exhibited in the Library of the House. This request will be complied with. The Bill does not deal with a very extended area of land; but it is necessary that rifle practice should continue over the area affected, and that the public should be protected from the long range firing. It is impossible in a Bill of this scope to explain the exact changes which are proposed. They will form matter for consideration in Committee. I propose to move that the Bill be referred to a Hybrid Committee, so that if any individual thinks he is aggrieved he may have the opportunity of being heard by counsel or otherwise. I will not detain the Committee further, but will simply

move that the Bill be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Brodrick.*)

*(10.25.) MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: This Bill is of a very exceptional character, because it proposes to stop up roads and footpaths over many thousand acres of land. I do not say at present whether this is right or wrong, but certainly it ought not to be done without great consideration in the interests of the public; it is sought to be effected without that public investigation in the locality which would be deemed necessary in other cases. For the present, however, I shall be satisfied if the changes are shown in the plan to be exhibited in the Library, and if the Bill is referred to a Hybrid Committee, before whom individuals interested can be heard without the necessity of appearing by counsel.

(10.27.) MR. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke): It seems to me that the stopping of these footpaths must obviously be to the interest of the public, seeing that they are not safe to people traversing them by reason of the rifle shooting. But I should like to know who is to keep up the new roads and footpaths when they are established. If they are to be used exclusively by the military, I think they ought to be kept up at the expense of the War Office. If, however, they are going to be thrown upon the Local Authorities, care ought to be taken that they are properly made up before they are accepted.

(10.28.) MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I was glad to hear the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford, because they entirely justify the action I have thought it my duty to take, on several occasions, in refusing to allow the Bill to be taken after midnight. I have taken that course more than once, holding that the Government should not expect to be allowed to take important business after midnight when they have taken all the time of private Members before midnight. I am not going to oppose the passage of the measure, because I think it will probably be in the interest of the public. I cannot, however, accept the proposition laid down by the hon. Member for Basingstoke, who says it is in the interest of the public to stop the footpaths for the reason that if they used them they might get shot. It seems to me a most extraordinary doctrine that we should stop up footpaths because certain gentlemen, military or otherwise, want to shoot at long ranges. But I presume these alterations have in view the arrangements of the Rifle Association as well as those of the regular Military Authorities. It is impossible to criticise the proposals of the Government until we have the plan before us, and I am glad the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill has promised to place a map in the Library. I think, however, that attention ought to be called to the exceptional power that is taken in the Bill to suspend occasionally existing rights of way. That seems to me a very novel proceeding which the Committee ought to carefully examine into. Then there is the clause which deals with compensation for the stopping up or the diversion of rights of way. The Board of Agriculture is to hold an inquiry and award such compensation as it may think just out of money to be provided by Parliament. I should have thought the President of the Board of Agriculture had his hands full already; but whether that is so or not, I object to the proposal to do away with the open inquiry in the locality which usually takes place when there is any question of the stopping up of public rights of way, and to place the matter in the hands of officials in any one of the Departments of the State. Where rights of way are in question, the Local Authorities, such as the County Councils, ought to be represented, and have their say. However, these matters may very properly be left to the examination and consideration of the Select Committee. I hope the hon. Member in charge of the Bill will see that the Committee is so comprised that it will give a fair hearing to all parties interested.

(10.32.) MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): I feel obliged to make a few comments on this piece-meal legislation. There are ranges in other places besides Aldershot. I think it would be far more business-like for the Government to bring in a Bill giving the Crown power to take land, and to pay for it in the ordinary way. I utterly fail to see why persons whose rights are taken away by the Crown or the Government should be sent to a State Board, while persons whose land is taken by a Railway Company can have recourse to the law. Why has the machinery of the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act been thrown overboard, and this perfectly new and undefined machinery adopted?

(10.35.) MR. BRODRICK: The hon. Member has, I think, overstated the change proposed to be made. The Board of Agriculture merely replaces the old Land Commission, and takes over the duties of that Board. In reply to my hon. Friend (Mr. Jeffreys), the roads proposed to be made are award roads of 1826, and the Highway Boards are quite ready to take them over.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Select Committee of seven Members:—Four to be nominated by the House, and three by the Committee of Selection.

ELECTORAL DISABILITIES (NAVAL, MILITARY, AND POLICE) BILL.

(NO. 146.) COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

*(10.36.) MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea): I beg to move the Instruction which stands in my name. The Bill seeks to remove disabilities in the case of certain classes only. My Instruction would extend the principle of the Bill to its logical conclusion, and if it is adopted, the Committee will be enabled to afford relief in the case of railway servants, merchant sailors, artisans, and others, who are at the present time in many cases disqualified.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert clauses in the Bill to remove the disabilities attaching to voters who have been absent from their qualifying premises under any contract of service or in the execution of a public duty.—(*Mr. Whitmore.*)

(10.37.) MR. CHANCE: I should have thought that on a Bill of this importance the right hon. and learned Gentleman in charge of the measure would have vouchsafed some explanation. Personally, I do not think the Instruction goes far enough or meets the whole difficulty. I object to the entire framing of the Bill The difficulty which exists under the present franchise is that any householder must, to qualify himself for a vote, be in occupation of the premises for the whole of the qualifying period. While voluntary absence for six, seven, or eight months does not disqualify a man, absence on duty—the absence of a policeman or a sailor who has signed articles, even for one day—disqualifies a man for a whole year. The simplest way of dealing with the question would have been to make it an amendment of the general law, and get rid of this absurd doctrine that compulsory absence for 24 hours is a bar to the franchise. A great many people are subjected to disability, and I fail to see why only some men should be singled out for exceptional favour. Some explanation is necessary before the House can wisely permit the Second Reading to be taken.

*MR. SPEAKER: This is not the Second Reading. The question is, whether this Instruction should be given to the Committee.

MR. CHANCE: I desire to know why the Irish Police, for instance, should receive this favourable treatment, while other persons with far greater interest in the locality should be omitted from consideration. The Irish policeman is liable to be shifted from one end of the country to the other, and under this Bill it would be possible for one to qualify in a county where the election was pretty close—one of the divisions of Tyrone, for example. All that is necessary is that he should be there on the 20th of July, 1890, and the 20th of July, 1891. Why are seamen omitted from consideration by the Bill? Everyone knows that seamen are compelled to sign articles in the Merchant Service, and that they commit an offence if they absent themselves from service. It is held, however, that absence for a single week in a coasting steamer would be a disqualification. It seems to me absurd to bring in a Bill dealing with policemen and military, and to leave out of consideration seamen who are absent under articles.

*MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. and learned Gentleman to speak to the Instruction before the House.

MR. CHANCE: May I point out that I am showing that certain classes of men have been omitted from consideration?

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I accept the Instruction.

MR. CHANCE: Yes; but you will allow discussion. There is another question which I do not think the Instruction raises, and that is the question of the right of a voter to vote at a polling booth which is not in his own polling district. That right is reasonably given by the Bill to two classes of people, and I suggest to the Mover of the Instruction that his Instruction ought to be widened so as to give the right to other classes of persons, such as engine drivers and railway servants, who may find it difficult to be in their own polling district on the polling day. There is a third class of persons whom the Instruction ought to include, and they are the persons who have renewed——

*MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but I must point out to him that the Instruction only refers to persons who are absent under any contract of service or in the execution of their duty.

MR. CHANCE: I am arguing that the Instruction ought to be widened. I think the Instruction ought not only to remove the bar to the right to vote, but should give facilities to vote, such as the Bill affords to two classes of individuals. Other persons ought to be afforded quite as great facilities for voting as policemen and soldiers. I submit that, under the Instruction, it would not be open for the Committee to make that alteration, and I hope the hon. Member (Mr. Whitmore) will re-consider his Instruction or will at least inform the House he is not adverse to an Amendment of the Instruction which would make the matter clearer and enable persons to get not only one advantage, but all the advantages which the Bill proposes to give.

*(10.49.) SIR R. WEBSTER: If the hon. Member for Kilkenny had been present at the Debate on the Second Reading he would know that this Bill has been introduced at the request of the Revising Barristers in various parts of the country, who think it very hard that persons away on duty for four months should lose their vote. On the Second Reading the hon. Member for Chelsea suggested that the Bill should be extended to all contracts of service, and, on behalf of the Government, acquiescence with that view was given. Amendments have been put upon the Paper to carry out that intention. If seamen come within the words I have put down, namely, "in the performance of any duty of his office, employment, or service," they will be included in the Bill. It has been suggested that railway servants ought to have some special privileges. So far as railway servants have to be absent from their homes for the qualifying period, they will be included in the Bill. Then it is suggested that, in addition, there should be facilities for these men to vote at places other than their own polling districts. I have made some inquiry, and I have found there is no practical grievance. It is not desirable to extend the power of voting at other polling places more than is absolutely necessary, and I am informed that railway men will, as a rule, be able to vote some time between the hours of 8 and 8.

*(10.51.) MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.): The hon. and learned Gentleman says there is no practical grievance as regards railway men. He is mistaken. Numbers of railway servants are unable to vote in consequence of being sent away before the day of election, and being unable to return to their homes until after the day of polling. I see great practical difficulty in dealing with the matter: but it ought to be possible; and might, if we could provide that all elections should take place on the same day. In that case there would be no difficulty in enabling railway servants to poll in constituencies in which they happened to be at the time of the election; their ballot papers being transmitted to their own constituencies.

(10.53.) MR. T. M. HEALY: I consider the Bill is a very useful one, and therefore it is one to which I should not like to see any strenuous opposition made. As far as it goes, it accomplishes a very desirable object, but, at the same time, it is necessary to point out that the measure would never have been necessary but for the decision of the Queen's Bench in England in the case of "King against Mitchell." That decision as regards soldiers and sailors was distinctly dissented from in Ireland by the Irish Court of Appeal; but, in order to promote uniformity in the franchise in the three countries, the Irish Court were with great reluctance bound to follow the English case. The result has been a state of things in Ireland which even the Instruction of the hon. Member for Chelsea does not meet. In a recent case in Ireland, as regards sailors, there was the most unnatural construction of the law that perhaps any Court ever gave. The Irish Judges have declared that if a sailor takes passage on the night mail from Belfast to Barrow-in-Furness, or from one little coasting station in Ireland to another little coasting station in Scotland or England, under articles by which he can be compelled to go on board under the Merchant Shipping Act, he is disqualified.

Sir R. WEBSTER: That is dealt with in the Bill.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Yes, under the Bill he may be absent for not more than four months from his home.

Sir. R. WEBSTER: The four months applies to all persons. It is not thought right to give a greater extension to one class of men than to another.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: A pure fallacy. If a man lets his house furnished during the summer, and occupies it during the rest of the year it is considered a very hard thing that he should lose the franchise. That man, however, puts another family into his house. The sailor, on the other hand, continues to pay his rates and taxes, and his wife and children remain in possession of the premises. The two cases are wholly different, and I suggest that the four months' analogy which has been imported into the law, is an entirely false one. Why should the man who returns home within the four months retain the franchise, whilst the man who is absent for five or six months loses it? The real test ought to be constructive occupation of the premises. If a man, through his wife and family, remain in occupation of the house, he ought not to lose his vote. This is a seafaring nation. The English people owe their greatness and potentiality to their seafaring character. I hope the Government will recognise that four months is a pernicious limit and will re-consider their decision. I welcome the change in this Bill, although I believe that from a Party point of view it may injure us in Derry, where the Militiamen, who are mostly Nationalists, are generally shipped to some place in the South of England when the day of election comes. Let us try to come to an agreement on the Bill by providing that where a man remains in constructive occupation of his premises, and is, as Gilbert would say, "a pure and blameless ratepayer," he shall not lose his vote by reason of absence from home. I therefore propose to add to the words of the hon. Member for Chelsea—

> "Or in other cases where the voter, notwithstanding his personal absence, has been in constructive occupation of the qualifying premises."

You have not in England that keen watch kept upon the register—that attack upon it which obtains in Ulster. In Derry and Belfast you may find men watching the Police Courts with the sole object of discovering those persons who, being charged with drunkenness, are imprisoned because they cannot pay the fine. One consequence attaching to this imprisonment is the loss of the franchise. It may be that the House may take up a hoity-toity, virtuous attitude, as the House sometimes does, and say there should be no sympathy with drunkards; but it should be observed this depriving a man of the franchise is not because he happened to be drunk, but because he has not 5s. to pay the fine and prevent imprisonment. The rich drunkard goes about his business, and enjoys his franchise; but the poor man must go to prison until his friends raise the money to pay his fine, and for this he loses his electoral right. This is one of the cases the Bill does not cover. If we are going to deprive a man of the franchise for little lapses of this kind, that is reducing the franchise to an absurdity. It is an odious state of things, and not to be tolerated. In England the view of the Revising Barristers is to extend the franchise so far as possible within the law; but in Ireland the case is wholly different, and the object of the Revising Barrister is to cut the throat of the franchise. The Revising Barristers in Ireland are nominated by the Lord Lieutenant, and of the 20 appointed last October 18 were Tories. These men make a shambles of their Judgment Seat; you can see them with the chopping block at hand looking out for the head of every Nationalist in Ulster. You may tell from the name of a man whether he is a Nationalist. The O'Mahoneys, the Murphys, the Donovans, and such like, you may rely are Nationalists. But when you light upon a man with the name of Blenkinsop or something of that kind in the North of Ireland, then you may safely put him down as a Tory. Any man with knowledge of the country knows the politics of a man as he comes up in these narrow divisions, and the partisan action of these Revising Barristers has become a scandal in Ireland. The Amendment I propose is to add at the end of the Instruction—

> "Or in other cases where a voter, notwithstanding his personal absence, has been in constructive occupation of the qualifying premises."

*(11.5.) MR. SPEAKER: I do not think that would be in order. The Bill is to exempt from disqualification to be on the register those persons of three classes who are disqualified by reason of absence, namely, the Military, Naval, and Police Forces, acting under authority, and to provide that absence under such circumstances should not be a disqualification. The Instruction now proposes to extend this to other persons who might be acting under contract of service; but I do not think it would be in order to attach to that provisions as to occupation, the lodgers' franchise registration, or other matters connected with the franchise, but apart from the purpose of the Bill.

(11.6.) MR. T. M. HEALY: It is perfectly true, Sir, that the Bill deals only with the Naval, Military, and Police Forces; but the Amendment which the Government have accepted proposes to remove the disability also in the case of those absent from the qualifying premises under any contract of service; and my suggestion is that the disqualification should be removed where persons have been absent generally, provided they have had a constructive occupancy through their wives and families.

*(11.7.) MR. SPEAKER: I apprehend from that no Instruction would be required. I think that an Amendment providing that a contract of service—compulsory service, compelling absence from qualifying premises should not be held to disqualify—would come within the scope of the Bill, and if within the scope of the Bill, would be in order.

(11.7.) MR. T. M. HEALY: Of course, Sir, if you rule that I should be in order in moving my Amendment in Committee, that will quite satisfy me.

(11.8.) MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): I do not understand from your views, Sir, that this Amendment would be in order, but, that on the contrary, it would be altogether outside the scope of the Bill, and so could not be taken into consideration in Committee. In respect to the Amendment, I submit as a point of order that it is really a new Instruction, and not an addition to the Motion we have now before us, and so, in any case, notice of it should appear on the Paper.

(11.8.) MR. STANSFELD (Halifax): On the question of order, Sir, I presume we are entitled to alter the title of the Bill and its contents?

(11.9.) SIR R. WEBSTER: May I point out that the Bill does not in any way affect or alter the law as to the qualifying occupation, but simply proposes that where there is a qualifying occupation absence under a contract of service shall not disqualify.

*(11.9.) MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): May I ask whether commercial travellers and coachmen would come under the exemption from disqualification?

SIR R. WEBSTER: Yes, if under a contract of service.

*MR. SPEAKER: That is the whole point, absence from qualifying premises under contract of service.

(11.10.) MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg): The Government have agreed to accept the Instruction by which the scope of the Bill will be largely extended beyond the original intention, and I wish to extend it so as to meet such cases as that of railway servants in the locomotive service. These men—and the number is large—leave home on long railway journeys before the poll opens and return after the poll has closed. I would ask the Attorney General if he can see his way to introducing in the Bill a provision to meet such cases as these, where, by the requirements of their occupation, men are prevented from the exercise of the franchise because they cannot attend the poll. Then there is another class on whose behalf I make an appeal, Nonconformist ministers. They are under contracts of service of a very important character, which practically disqualify them from the exercise of the franchise.

I speak more particularly of the Wesleyan Body, though my remarks may apply to other Nonconformist ministers. The rule in the Wesleyan Church is that the minister shall stay three years in the district to which he is appointed, and then he is transferred, perhaps, to the other end of the Kingdom. Those changes of residence disqualify, and I would ask is it not possible to arrive at some arrangement by which these men, who may be counted by the thousand—men of education such as it is desirable to have on the register—may exercise the franchise under their terms of service?

(11.12.) MR. STOREY (Sunderland): There is another class of men for whom I desire to say a word. The Bill provides that a policeman absent on duty may record his vote in a booth other than the one to which, as an ordinary voter, he should go. Now, in boroughs such as Sunderland, there may be 60 or 70 polling booths, and as many Returning Officers and clerks. These officials, as a matter of fact, have no means of voting, because they cannot leave the booth where they are employed. Unless the Mayor is in sympathy with a Returning Officer, and appoints him to a booth where he can register his vote, these electors are deprived of the opportunity of exercising the franchise at all, unless, indeed, by a hurried drive in a cab, they can contrive to do this.

MR. TOMLINSON: I rise to order, Sir. The Bill, I submit, does not affect the right to vote, but the right to be on the register.

*MR. SPEAKER: The point is that members of the Naval, Military, and Police Service are not to be disqualified by reason of enforced absence under contract of service, and the argument is that other classes absent under authority should not be precluded from voting, and the question is whether some means may be devised enabling such persons to vote.

MR. STOREY: I am obliged to you, Sir, for making my meaning clear to the hon. Member. By way of bringing the matter to an issue, I propose to add, when the present Amendment is disposed of, the words—

"Or are unable to vote at their polling place, owing to the execution of a public duty."

Mr. Waddy

*MR. SPEAKER: The Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Longford is not in order; does the hon. Member move now?

Mr. STOREY assented.

Amendment proposed, to add to the proposed Instruction, the words—

"Or are unable to vote at their polling places, owing to the execution of a public duty in connection with the election."

(11.18.) SIR R. WEBSTER: I think if the hon. Member had had an opportunity of looking over the Bill, he would have seen that, without the necessity of any Instruction, he could move his Amendment to Clause 3. The Instruction has reference to Clause 2, and this clause provides that the Revising Barrister shall not strike off the register soldiers and sailors who happen to be absent on the Public Service, and the Instruction is to extend that provision to other kinds of Service referred to in the Debate on the Second Reading. What the hon. Member for Sunderland desires is that there should be means to enable persons other than constables, who may be absent on the polling day, to record their votes in other than their own district. I believe that this would be in order on Clause 3, but, in any case, it is clear that it does not apply to this Instruction, which has reference to removing disqualifications to being on the register, not to prevention from voting.

(11.20.) MR. STOREY: That is just what I cannot understand. [*Cries of* "Spoken."] I ask permission of the House to point out that this is a Bill to remove the disabilities of persons in the Naval, Military and Police Forces, and this is dealt with in Clause 2.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: As to the register.

MR. STOREY: But suppose they are registered, how does Clause 3 deal with any other persons than those dealt with in Clause 2?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir E. CLARKE, Plymouth): It is another subject.

MR. STOREY: Do I understand that, notwithstanding that Clause 2 deals with naval, military and police duties, it is the opinion of the Attorney General, which I hope may be fortified by the ruling of the Chair, that I shall be enabled to move, on Clause 3, that the ability to vote in other booths than their own shall also be allowed to civil persons or others than those in the Naval, Military and Police Services persons engaged in the conduct of elections?

*(11.23.) SIR R. WEBSTER: It is not for me to express an opinion, but I should have thought, subject to the ruling of the Chair, that it would be open to the hon. Member when we are dealing with Clause 3 to put down such an Amendment. At any rate, it has nothing to do with the present Instruction.

(11.23.) MR. STOREY: On a point of order, Sir, I would ask whether I should be in order, on Clause 3, in moving the Amendment I have put into your hands?

*(11.24.) MR. SPEAKER: The former part of the Bill deals with qualification for the register. Clause 3 will confer the ability to vote to men so qualified under the Bill if, in the execution of duty, they are in other polling places than their own. Under the circumstances, I think it might be competent for the hon. Member to raise the point on Clause 3.

(11.25.) MR. COURTNEY: With great respect, I submit it is a point upon which I do not find myself able to agree with the Attorney General.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I daresay I am wrong; I only stated my own opinion.

MR. COURTNEY: Clause 3 enables a constable who is sent on duty to a particular booth to vote at that booth, although it is not his polling place; but he does so, being sent by superior authority he cannot resist, and he is unable to record his vote except under the permission this Bill gives him. Returning Officers and clerks voluntarily accept their duties; they are not under a contract of service which requires them to undertake particular duties. Clause 2 effects the removal of the disability which rests upon a man through absence from qualifying premises through duties under his contract of service, and ensures his being placed upon the register. Clause 3 deals with the special position of constables who, when on duty, are permitted to vote at the nearest polling place. Without enlightenment I do not now possess, I do not see how the Amendment connects itself with this clause, or how in Committee it could be extended in this way. An Instruction would be necessary to effect this, and it should be a new Instruction, not an Amendment to the present one. It is new matter entirely, to be dealt with at the proper time and after notice.

*(11.26.) MR. SPEAKER: Then arises this difficulty: There will be no opportunity of putting down notice of an Instruction. The other Instructions are out of order; the hon. Member cannot move an Instruction now without notice, and the present Instruction being disposed of, I leave the Chair, and the hon. Member will be shut out from his opportunity of moving.

*(11.28.) MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): To give an opportunity for clearing up the matter, I beg to move the adjournment of the Debate. We have, as Liberals, no objection to this increase of voting power to soldiers, seamen, and police, but we insist that whatever increased ability you give to these classes shall be extended to all, and with this I understand the Attorney General agrees, from the words of an Amendment he has given notice of to Clause 2, for he proposes to introduce the words "performance of any duty of his office or employment," striking out words which restrict and limit. That, no doubt, enlarges the scope of the Bill in the direction we desire on this side. The other Instructions are out of order, but it is important that uncertainties should be cleared up, so that when we get into Committee we shall meet with no difficulty in moving Amendments that shall give to all other persons equal facilities to those that are to be extended to soldiers, seamen, and police, or others under "contract of service." There is no mention of "contract of service" in the Amendment of the Attorney General to Clause 2; he says, "performance of any duty of his office or employment." If these words are embodied in the Bill it is only reasonable that facilities for ability to record the vote should be as much included as facilities to get on the Register. Our contention is that Wesleyan ministers, commercial travellers, railway guards, engineers, and others should have equal facilities for voting with the Army, Navy, and Police.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—*(Mr. Winterbotham.)*

*(11.30.) MR. CAUSTON: I second het Motion of my hon. Friend. I do it because I think this is a tinkering bit of piecemeal legislation, and I hold that the Government ought to have a further opportunity of considering this Bill. I can quite understand its being brought in by a private Member for private purposes; but I cannot understand the Government introducing this incomplete Bill, after the speech of the Solicitor General at Westminster a short time since, when he said—

> "He hoped it might be in the power of the present Government to deal with the subject of registration. He had always said in the House of Commons and on the platform that when Parliament had made up its mind as to the particular class of persons who should enjoy the franchise, it was their duty to see that it was rendered as easy as possible for every individual belonging to that class to obtain and keep the privileges."

I well know that on the question of registration the Government are divided. The Solicitor General speaks one way at Westminster, and almost at the same time, at Hull, the Chancellor of the Exchequer is saying that a Registration Bill "would mean a new distribution of political power once more tinkering with the Constitution," and "attempting once more to pick our Constitution to pieces." I repeat that this Bill is only tinkering with the subject, and I hope we shall be supported in the Motion for adjournment.

*(11.33.) SIR R. WEBSTER: I hope my hon. Friend will not persist in that Motion. The hon. Member who has just spoken has not heard this Debate——

*MR. CAUSTON: I have heard every word.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: There have been from all sides of the House speeches in support of this Bill. I brought it in at the request of Revising Barristers from many parts of the country.

MR. STOREY: Not from the North.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I expressed my willingness to accept this Instruction, in consequence of a pledge given during the Debate on the Second Reading, and I hoped that it would meet the wishes of hon. Members.

(11.34.) MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I support the Motion for adjournment. I differ from the statement of the Attorney General, that the Government are fulfilling the promise made on the Second Reading Debate. If my memory serves me aright, during that Debate the Government promised to allow the Bill to be so extended as to meet the case of all classes of society, and not merely those originally mentioned in it. Now, we are in somewhat of a difficulty. The Chairman of Committees has frankly told us that he should, in Committee, consider himself bound to the original clauses, and that he would not be able to admit the Amendments we desire to have accepted. If the Government agree to the adjournment they will be able to bring up an Instruction of their own, which will apply to persons who are at present debarred from voting by their calling on the day of polling, and who are in identically the same position as the soldier, the sailor, and the policeman.

(11.36.) MR. CONYBEARE: I am in favour of the Bill and of the Instruction, on the broad principle that I am in favour of universal suffrage. If it be extended to women, I shall be the better pleased. There seems, however, to be a considerable amount of doubt as to where we now stand in respect of this particular Instruction; and I think that, under the circumstances, the Attorney General can hardly resist the Motion for Adjournment. There is a great question as to how far we are committed, and as to whether it will be possible in Committee to introduce Amendments for the purpose of carrying into effect an Instruction which the Government have declared themselves to be in favour of accepting. If the Government accept the Motion for Adjournment, they will have time to consider the very reasonable protest which has been made on this side of the House. Of course, we know that the Tories would be the last Party in the world to do injustice to any class of people, and, therefore, I am not without hope that the Attorney General will accept this Motion. I am rather fogged about this business. I have listened attentively to what has gone on, especially with reference to one class of persons, I mean the Wesleyan ministers.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The question before the House is the Motion for Adjournment.

MR. CONYBEARE: I did not intend to travel beyond the limits of that Motion. I can only say that if the

Government accept this Motion for Adjournment, they will be able to give consideration to the case of the special hardship on Wesleyan ministers. Wesleyans form a not inconsiderable portion of my constituents, and I do, in their interests, urge the Attorney General to accept this Motion. I should like the Attorney General to tell us frankly upon what reasonable ground this Resolution for Adjournment can possibly be resisted. Can the Solicitor General, with all his deepness, get up and pose as an arbitrator between the Chairman of Committees and yourself, Sir?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is travelling beyond the scope of the Debate. The Question is that the Debate be now adjourned.

(11.42.) MR. WADDY: We are distinctly told—and we have to thank the Chairman of Committees for this information—that the particular class of persons whom we are desirous of bringing under the operation of this clause cannot be so dealt with by means of this Instruction, and that it will be necessary to alter the Instruction. I, therefore, submit that it is desirable that the Debate should be adjourned. I have no desire to obstruct this Bill. ["Oh, oh!"] Hon. Members opposite cry, "Oh, oh!" Possibly they know a good deal more of my mind than I do myself, and certainly if one may judge from their votes they know more of it than they do of their own mind. We are anxious to accept this Bill, but we want to extend its scope, and that cannot be done unless this Motion for adjournment is agreed to. Its acceptance would enable the Government to formulate such an Instruction as would ensure to all classes the right which we wish them to have. I earnestly hope that my hon. Friend will press his Motion, if necessary, to a Division; and if the Government refuse to agree to it I warn them that it will make the subsequent progress of the Bill a great deal more difficult.

(11.45.) SIR E. CLARKE: It has been asked why the Government object to this Motion for an adjournment. It is because the Government are anxious that a practical step should be taken in the direction of pressing forward a Bill, with regard to which both sides of the House are united. No one can object to the Instruction which is now under discussion, and which has been brought in in consonance with the promises made during the Second Reading of the Debate.

(11.46.) MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling, &c.): I cannot altogether agree with what has fallen from the hon. and learned Gentleman as to what occurred in the course of the Debate on the Motion for the Second Reading of this Bill. I do not remember that any desire was then expressed that the widening of the scope of this Bill should be confined to any particular class, as is done in this Instruction, which undoubtedly confines its operation to persons in particular circumstances, and persons who are absent from home under orders from other people.

SIR E. CLARKE: Those are the only people who under the law can be disqualified.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That is a satisfactory definition if, as I understand the hon. and learned Member, no one is deprived of the opportunity of having his name placed on the Register in consequence of absence from home except those who are under orders from other people. Then I think we shall be satisfied, and if that is the legal decision no more is to be said on the matter. I am anxious that this matter should be clearly defined, and that all the persons whose cases have been referred to by my hon. Friend should be covered in this Instruction.

*(11.50.) MR. T. H. BOLTON: I think an adjournment would afford the Government an opportunity of considering whether the scope of Clause 3 could not be enlarged, so as to give facilities to other classes of persons to vote. If the Government will bring in a clause of enlarged scope I am sure that it will receive full support from this side of the House. I appeal to the Government to give us this opportunity of enlarging the operation of the Bill. I am as anxious as anyone that the Bill should pass.

(11.52.) MR. STOREY: The Solicitor General seems to think that this Bill is supported by Members in all parts of the House. I can tell him frankly that, for my part, I do not agree with the Bill, at all. To use a northern vernacular, I think it is a silly little Bill.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is not the Question before the House.

MR. STOREY: I beg your pardon, Sir. I did not understand——

*MR. SPEAKER: The Debate has been considerably strained. The Question really before the House is the Motion for adjournment.

MR. STOREY: Very well, Sir; I will address myself to that. We ask for an adjournment because Clause 3 does not enable us to secure for others than soldiers, sailors, and policemen these voting facilities. The Chairman of Committees insinuated, in a delicate manner, that if in Committee we propose this Amendment he would have to rule it out of order. That leads me to say we are placed between the devil and the deep sea. I do not use the word offensively. Of course, we may get rid of the former individual, but we cannot get rid of the deep sea, and I submit that this adjournment is necessary to enable us to get the Instruction amended. I do not stand so much upon the case of Dissenting ministers, nor do I rest my argument upon the case of the railway guards. I ask the Attorney General whether, under his Instruction, a policeman at the door of the polling booth will be able——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I have already told the hon. Gentleman that he is not in order. The Question before the House is the adjournment of the Debate.

MR. STOREY: I will not trouble the House further. I do not think it would be possible to amend the Instruction at this minute, and, therefore, I support the Motion for the Adjournment, so that the Government may itself draw up an amended Instruction which will cover the case of soldiers, sailors, and policemen, as well as the other classes to whom reference has been made.

(11.59.) DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I hope it will not be necessary to force this to a Division. Seeing that it is now just upon 12 o'clock, I think the Government might agree to this Motion.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! It is only one minute to 12, and as the Debate must stand adjourned at midnight, I think possibly it will be agreed on all sides that there is no necessity to divide upon this Question.

Question put, and agreed to.

Debate adjourned till Thursday.

BARRACKS [CONSOLIDATED FUND.]

Resolution [20th June] reported.

"That it is expedient to authorise the charge on, and issue out of, the Consolidated Fund of any deficiency which there may be in the moneys provided by Parliament for the payment of the principal and interest of any sums borrowed by the Treasury, under the provisions of any Act of the present Session for building and enlarging barracks and camps in the United Kingdom and in certain Colonies."

Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

NEW LICENCES (IRELAND) BILL.

(NO. 249.) COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I wish to ask whether the Government have decided on any action in relation to the Motion I made last night? I should like to know how soon they hope to put down Amendments to my Bill? I would suggest that it is only reasonable that we should know as early as possible what their Amendments are to be.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): I may inform the hon. Member that if he will put down his Bill for Monday the Government will be prepared with their Amendments.

Committee deferred till Wednesday 2nd July.

STRIKES BILL.—(No. 174.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

OFFICE UNDER THE CROWN (VACATION OF SEATS) BILL.—(No. 136.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

House adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 25th June, 1890.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

DIRECTORS' LIABILITY BILL.—(No. 300.)

Bill, as amended, further considered.

(12.35.) Mr. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I beg to move at the end of Clause 3 to add—

> "Or unless he proves with respect to every such incorrect or misleading statement that it was in reference to some matter or thing which was known to one or more of the other Directors and not disclosed to him."

The object of this Amendment is to provide that, in the event of misleading statements having been made by individuals which were not disclosed to the Directors generally, an individual Director to whom such statements were not made known should not be damnified. I submit that this is a reasonable protection to persons who are induced to become Directors, and unless such a provision is made I do not see how any individual is to protect himself against a false representation.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 34, at the end of Clause 3, to insert the words "Or unless he proves with respect to every such incorrect or misleading statement that it was in reference to some matter or thing which was known to one or more of the other Directors and not disclosed to him."—(*Mr. Murphy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

(12.39.) Sir G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): No doubt the case to which the hon. Member alludes may be a hard case, but I think that every Director before he gives his name to a prospectus is bound to do something to ascertain the truth of the statements he is putting forward. Even if he is not personally guilty it is better that he should suffer than that the public should be defrauded. If these words are inserted a Director will simply plead ignorance. I take it that a man who gets £200 or £300 a year for the mere use of his name should not be absolved from the consequences of any misleading effect which the use of his name may have had, so far as the public are concerned.

(12.40.) Mr. WARMINGTON (Monmouth, W.): I hope the hon. Member will not press the Amendment. He must have forgotten what the provisions of the Bill are, and that they require every Director, before giving the sanction of his name, to have made every reasonable inquiry and examination. Surely, in regard to a statement made in a prospectus with a view to obtaining money from the public, it is not too much to require that those authorising it shall have made reasonable inquiry before they allow their names to go forth.

(12.41.) Mr. ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I, for one, must oppose the Amendment in every possible way, on the ground that it would legalise the very thing which the Bill is intended to prevent.

*(12.42.) Mr. KELLY (Camberwell, N.): I also think that the words of this Amendment would afford too much protection to a careless or even a fraudulent Director. It would open the door to endless fraud, for a Director would not only take no steps whatever to obtain information as to the misleading statements in the prospectus, but might even, if a substantial man, take care, by making an agreement with his impecunious colleagues on the Board, that the statements should not be disclosed to him, with the effect, if this Amendment were assented to now, of his being thus enabled to evade all liability for them.

(12.43.) Mr. MURPHY: I beg to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

*(12.44.) Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston): I have placed the following Amendment upon the Paper—to add at the end of Clause 3 the following words:—

> "(c.) In this section the word 'expert' includes any person whose official position or special knowledge gives authority to a statement made by him, and the expression 'misleading statement' means a statement which is so made as by suppression of fact or ambiguity to create a false impression."

A general concurrence of opinion has been expressed that some Amendment in this direction is required, in order to provide some legal definition of the word "expert," which has never received any judicial interpretation. In order to meet some formal objections which have been suggested to me, I propose to leave out the word "position," and to substitute the word "professional" for "special," and to move the Amendment in that modified form. As to the second part of my Amendment, the expression "misleading statement" is equally without judicial interpretation, and the fear is that every Director would be at the mercy of any discontented shareholder, who would say that he had, in fact, been misled by the prospectus, and that therefore it must be considered to have been misleading.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 14, at the end of Clause 3, to insert, as a new Sub-section, the words—

(c.) "In this section the word "expert" includes any person whose official or professional knowledge gives authority to a statement made by him, and the expression "misleading statement" means a statement which is so made as by suppression of fact or ambiguity to create a false impression."—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

(4.48.) MR. WARMINGTON: I think it would be a matter of convenience if my hon. Friend would consent to divide the Amendment, seeing that different considerations apply to the first part from those which apply to the second. If my hon. Friend will, in the first place, move his Amendment down to the words "by him" I will not personally make any objection to it, as it seems to me that it may be a guide as to the definition of the liability.

*(4.49.) MR. TOMLINSON: I am quite willing to divide the Amendment, as suggested. I, therefore, beg leave to withdraw it, with the view of moving the first half down to the word "him."

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 14, to insert the words "In this section the word 'expert' includes any person whose official or professional knowledge gives authority to a statement made by him."—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

(4.50.) SIR R. LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.): I certainly regard this Amendment as a very important one, and a very serious doubt occurs to me with regard to the propriety of passing it. When the subject was under discussion some time ago there was a distinct pledge given to the House by the President of the Board of Trade that when the Bill was taken into another House those in charge of it would take care that a definition of the word "expert" should be inserted, so as to meet the objections which have been urged in this House. I would suggest to my hon. and learned Friend that the words originally placed on the Paper, "official position or special knowledge," would be preferable to the amended version which he now proposes. I do not think that the words "official or professional knowledge" are broad enough to meet the objections which are made to the use of that very indefinite word "expert." Personally, I should like to retain all three phrases—"official," "special," and "professional." I think that all three are needed in order to give the full meaning of the word "expert," and I would venture to suggest to my hon. and learned Friend, and to the hon. Member in charge of the Bill, that the real meaning to be assigned to the word "expert" is of such vital importance that it would be advisable to have a conference with the President of the Board of Trade on the subject.

*(12.52.) MR. G. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire): We have discussed this question seven or eight hours already, and voted upon it three or four times. I therefore think the time has come when the House should arrive at some definite conclusion. It does not seem to me that the Amendment will do either good or harm, for it simply includes in the Bill that which the Court itself would have introduced by way of construction.

(12.53.) MR. WARMINGTON: In answer to the objection of the hon. Member for North Kensington, I may say that the President of the Board of Trade has already considered these words and has assented to the form in which they are moved.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE: I desired to convey no imputation whatever upon the good faith of the President of the Board of Trade. On the contrary, I am satisfied that whatever pledge he has given he will fulfil.

(12.54.) MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Oldham): I cannot see that there is any objection to the Amendment, and I think it is only right we should let the House of Lords know what we mean by the word "expert."

Question put, and agreed to.

Another Amendment proposed, at the end of the last Amendment, to insert the words—

"And the expression 'misleading statement' means a statement which is so made as by suppression of fact or ambiguity to create a false impression."—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

Question put, "That those words be there inserted."

(1.0.) The House divided:—Ayes 37; Noes 97.—(Div. List, No. 155.)

*MR. SPEAKER: I would suggest to the hon. Member for Longford that the Amendment which he has upon the Paper might be better proposed in the form of a sub-section of Clause 3, otherwise notice would be required for a new clause.

(1.3.) MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): The object of the Amendment I am about to move is one that I trust commends itself to the promoters of this Bill, and I hope it will be agreed to. We know that the modern so-called boom in shares began with the Guinness boom, in connection with brewery shares, in October, 1887. That boom was greatly stimulated by the Conversion Scheme of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The public invested in those shares since the date which I propose to appoint in this section. In 1888-9, the Chancellor of the Exchequer passed an Act requiring a certain amount of Stamp Duty on every £100 worth of shares. Therefore, if this Bill is to do anything to meet the difficulties in the way, and to capture fraudulent promoters, it ought to date from the year 1886. What is the good of locking the stable door after the steed is stolen? What good will it do to shareholders in Allsopp's to know that in future it will be impossible for a man in the position of Lord Hindlip to do what he did in connection with these shares? The Conservative Party have now declared themselves strongly in favour of the brewery interest, and all their money is invested in brewery or distillery shares. I suggest that it is vital to the general body of the public, in whose interest the Licensing Bill was introduced, that the Amendment should be adopted in order to prevent swindling by fraudulent promoters, largely in connection with these brewery shares. The matter is not confined to brewery shares. The Conservative Party is largely a warlike party, and we know very well that in connection with the Hotchkiss Gun, the Gatling Gun, and the Nordenfeldt Gun, and a number of other public companies, the grossest frauds are being perpetrated. I venture to say, since the days of Adam, if Adam was connected with company promoters, no greater fraud has been known to the public than in connection with the Gatling Gun Company. All these companies are shadowed forth to the public as companies that have paid an enormous interest, and anybody who will read their prospectuses will see at a glance that if this Bill is passed it is, as I say, locking the stable door after the steed has been stolen. I should ask, what satisfaction is it if I invested my money, say in Lord Hindlip's brewery, and he has pocketed his three millions, to find, when it comes to wanting the money back, that, as J. Gould said when he was asked to turn up the money that he had got in connection with the New York frauds, "it had gone where the woodbine twined." That is exactly the position of so large a number of the gentlemen connected with company promoting. I am happy to say that my losses have been very slight from the whole of them. So my action in this matter is purely disinterested. I view the matter from a very practical point of view. Take water gas. It was boomed to the world as a tremendous commodity which would knock out of time the electric light, and coal gas, and every other illuminant. £5 shares went up to £20, and then suddenly dropped, and everybody concerned got about £2 for their £5. Ought not the gentleman connected with that fraud to be unearthed? I suggest that it is a very remarkable piece of legislation, which proposes, after all the wrong and mischief has been done, to say that in the future only, forsooth, shall the remedy be applied. Then there was the leading case of Warner's Safe Cure. The £10 shares went up to £50 before the dealers in them knew where they were. And Mr. Warner and his gang of American sharpers plundered this country in the most marvellous American manner. When companies of this class are allowed to do this sort of thing, there must be something rotten in the state of Denmark. The hon. and learned Gentleman who is promoting this Bill has put down an Amendment to ear-mark his intentions, and to provide that the Bill shall only deal with all future swindles. It is a remarkable course for the hon. and learned Gentleman to pursue. I suppose the reason is that he has read so much of the doings of Warner and Lord Hindlip Allsopp, and all that class of persons, that he decided that, in future, persons in the peerage, who are connected with the brewing interest, shall be punished, and that the Peers in the past who have committed frauds on the public are to go scot free. That, in my opinion, is to take a course which cannot commend itself to the common sense of the House. I really think it is a remarkable state of facts that the English public do not turn and rend these company promoters, whose iniquity steams every day in the financial and leading newspapers. And to think that a Peer of the realm should pocket £3,000,000, and then, when it comes to be examined how many pounds he has allowed to remain in the company, it is found that only a paltry few thousands are invested, the remainder of the £3,000,000 being invested in Goschen or Government Stock. That is not a credit to the commercial status of this country. The fact that this gentleman and his friends are not torn to pieces by the indignant public shows the very remarkable state of numbness to which the public have been reduced by this system. If there is a class who deserve protection it is the class gulled by these circulars. I must say the fact of Members of Parliament lending their names to this system of company promoting is little less than a scandal, and this House, if it goes on, will become little less than a sty of guinea pigs. Of course, a Member of Parliament ought to be allowed, like any other man, to follow any business he chooses, but what I condemn is that the "M.P." should be blazoned forth and used as a bait to trap the unwary. The widow or the investor down in the country, when they see the respected name of their Member, or of some Member of the Tory Party, just made a Peer because of his connection with hops, published in association with some company, are inspirited with confidence, and invest their money. If Members of Parliament lend their names to public companies, the very name Member of Parliament will become almost as odious as the name Deputy has become in France. We know that in France a Bill was introduced to prevent Deputies lending their names to such companies. I do not know whether the Bill has been passed into law, but at any rate it has had a most salutary effect on the French community, and most of the crawling guinea pigs have been sent about their business by the electors. Of course, a number of these companies may be perfectly sound, and I believe a number of them are; but what I contend is that the great office to which we are elected in this House should not be turned into a simple connection with the promotion of companies. I see strings of Members of Parliament, dozens of them, connected with public companies. If you turn to the directory of Directors, you will find whole strings of Peers and Members of Parliament whose names are connected with these companies. Therefore, I say that what ought to be dealt with is this question of promotion in the past. It is not sufficient to deal with this evil as if it was a future evil. The mischief is done. The Conversion Scheme of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer let loose £100,000,000 for the purpose of investment. Guinness's boom opened the eyes of shareholders to investments offering the chance of 15 and 20 per cent. We ought to deal with the evil as one which commenced upon a given date. It would not do to go back to the days of the Glasgow Bank, or any case of that kind. There is a particular time which, in my opinion, ought to be taken as the starting point of fraud, and on this ground I beg to move the Amendment in the form which you have suggested, Sir, from the Chair.

Amendment proposed, at the end of the last Amendment, to insert the words—

"Provided always, that this Section shall apply to any prospectus or notice issued since the first day of October, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

(1.20.) MR. WARMINGTON: I cordially concur in the observations of the hon. Member for Longford, but, at the same time, I must explain my position in this matter. In Grand Committee I gave an undertaking that the action of the Bill should be prospective, and I believe I am bound, so far as I can, to insist that the Bill should be prospective. I have an Amendment on the Paper, however, promising that the Bill should come into force as soon as possible, and I propose that the Bill shall apply to notices and prospectuses issued after 1st of October, 1890. I am afraid, therefore, I shall not be able to support the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member, but must ask the House to allow the Bill to stand as it is, with prospective action, and to come into force as soon as possible.

(1.22.) MR. ISAACSON: I cannot possibly see how the measure can be made retrospective. But if it only takes effect from 1890, I feel sure that it will do a great deal of good. I read a calculation the other day that in five years something like £180,000,000 had been absolutely wasted, or, I may say, the public have been defrauded out of that enormous sum by bogus companies. I am extremely sorry that Members on both sides of the House should lend their names to companies day after day. I should have thought the Members of the Government would have had enough to do to attend to the business of Parliament, and I do think they ought not to take these offices. I remember some time since the Honduras Loan was brought out for 8s.

*MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport): I rise to order. The point is that this Bill should be retrospective from the 1st October, 1886.

MR. ISAACSON: I do not say the hon. and learned Gentleman is connected with a case of that kind, and I should be very sorry indeed to say so. The only thing I feel is this, that the public ought to be protected, and this Bill does not go far enough to protect the public in the matter of loans. This Honduras loan was brought out at 107, and it dwindled down to 13, and the man who brought it out had to leave the country.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must confine himself to the retrospective character of this Amendment.

MR. ISAACSON: I am anxious to obey the orders of the Chair. I do not see how this Bill is to be made retrospective without filling the Law Courts, and giving employment to some 150 gentlemen of the long robe.

*(1.26.) MR. G. OSBORNE MORGAN: I could wish for many reasons to vote with my hon. and learned Friend, but to adopt this Amendment would be a departure from the usual course of legislation. I believe there is no instance, or, at any rate, the instances are very rare, in which penal legislation has been made retrospective. Besides, if you antedate its operation why stop at 1885? Why not carry it back 10 or even 20 years? The one safe ground to take is to make the measure prospective.

*(1.27.) MR. J. M. MACLEAN: The right hon. Gentleman has pointed out the weak spot in the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman. The Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Longford is apparently directed against one or two companies to which he has strong objection.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Two or three hundred companies.

*MR. J. M. MACLEAN: The hon. Gentleman particularly specified Allsopp's, and he reproached this side of the House for investing all their money in brewery shares. I have never had a brewery share; therefore, I can speak impartially. The hon. Member throws all the blame on the Directors. He goes a good deal further than even the Bill, which proposes to make the liability of the Directors unlimited. That is a serious matter enough. But the hon. Member would allow no Member of Parliament to be a Director.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I have no objection to his being a Director; but I object to the "M.P." being used for the purposes of advertisement.

*MR. J. M. MACLEAN: That would hardly make any difference. Everybody knows whether a man is a Member of Parliament or not, and to take away the "M.P." from his name would be of very little consequence. But I would point out that the hon. Member himself has a good deal of private business, and yet he finds time to attend to business in this House very effectually. Members who are lawyers and physicians pocket fees for the advice they give. Why should Members of Parliament, with their business knowledge, be prevented from going into these companies. Why should a Member be denounced as a guinea pig because he takes fees for attending to the business of public companies? Nobody reproaches the lawyer or the physician for pocketing his fees. No doubt we should all like to be born millionaires, and then we should be like some of the hon. Members below the Gangway opposite, who have such a vehement antipathy to Directors. Some hon Members habitually speak of Directors as criminals.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The question is solely as to the retrospective action to be given to the Bill.

*MR. J. M. MACLEAN: I would point out, with great respect, that the hon. and learned Member was allowed to make a very strong attack on Directors generally, and especially on Members of this House who happen to be connected with public companies, and I claim very respectfully the right to say a word or two in justification of the action of Members of this House, who give their leisure time to the direction of companies. Throughout this discussion hon. Members have spoken of Directors in the freest terms. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir G. Campbell), for instance, habitually speaks of Directors as sinners. [*Cries of* "Order."]

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is out of order in addressing himself to the general question of the conduct of Directors. The question before the House is whether the provisions of this Bill shall be made retrospective.

*MR. J. M. MACLEAN: I will not say anything further on that point, but I thought that if it was my duty to correct the false impressions that were conveyed by the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Longford. He was loudly cheered when he denounced Directors generally. He seemed to work the House up to that state of mind which reminded me of a sentence of Macaulay's—

"We know no spectacle more ridiculous than that of the British public in one of its periodical fits of morality."

*MR. SPEAKER: I have already called the hon. Member to order on the ground that he is transgressing the rules of Debate. I must ask him to pay attention to the ruling of the Chair.

*MR. J. M. MACLEAN: It is difficult to restrain one's indignation at the attacks that have been recklessly made by the hon. and learned Member for Longford upon the reputation of perfectly innocent people, and it is rather hard that hon. Members are not permitted to reply to them. With regard to the hon. and learned Member's proposal to make the operation of the Bill retrospective, and apply the Bill to Companies already in existence, I may say that in the cases to which the hon. and learned Gentleman has referred the shareholders were as much to blame as the Directors. People, we know, go down on their knees and entreat Directors to make them an allotment, and then, if anything goes wrong, they turn round and abuse the Directors, expecting to get their losses back again. That is a thing which the House should thoroughly apprehend. This is not a question that concerns the public at large, but merely the shareholders and Directors in particular companies. I should be sorry to see the Bill made retrospective to all companies. There are a thousand millions invested in these companies, which are successfully carrying on some of the great industries of the country, and the men who direct them deserve thanks instead of being held up to reprobation as criminals.

(1.35.) SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I do not differ in any way from the sentiments which have been expressed by the hon. and learned Member for Longford, but I am not going to follow the hon. and learned Member in his remarks, because you, Sir, evidently are of opinion that some of the points he raised ought not to be discussed in this Amendment. I imagine that the hon. and learned Member in making those remarks, had in view the justification of his proposal that the House would adopt what, I admit, would be the rather exceptional course of making the provisions of the Bill retrospective. I do not think there is very often much blame attaching to the class of Directors. The question before the House is, whether we should be justified, on account of the blame which attaches to some Directors, in adopting this course, which is extremely unusual in English law. I, myself, must lie under the imputation of the hon. Member for Oldham, as I am suffering from one of the periodical attacks of morality, and I think it is a very good thing that the House of Commons has taken this matter up. I have voted steadily in favour of the most stringent provisions of this Bill, because, I think, it is high time that the public should be protected against the schemes of unscrupulous persons. In my opinion, the position of Membership of this House is often grossly abused, and is used for the purposes of advertisement. I do not, however, wish to do or say anything, or to make any imputation, against anyone who may happen to be a Member of this House, and who may happen, in the regular course of his life, to be a Director. That, I think, is a circumstance no one can condemn, but what I do condemn is the use of Membership of this House to advance the interests of Directors of companies. The question is whether we should, in the present Bill, do that which really would amount to what was called in the olden days a "Bill of Attainder," which had a retrospective action. I think that in doing that we should be departing from the usual course of legislation in these matters. It would be taking a very grave view of what is, unquestionably, a very grave subject. I hope that the Bill, as it stands, will be sufficient to restrain the practice complained of, and which I hope the great majority of the House are disposed to condemn. Although I am very much disinclined to vote against my hon. and learned Friend in this matter, I trust that, upon consideration, he will not press his Amendment, which certainly would almost be a solecism in legislation of this kind.

(1.40.) MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I should be most willing to support the proposal of the hon. and learned Member for Longford, for making the provisions of the Bill retrospective, if the hon. and learned Member will consent to those provisions relating back to 1881, so as to include the case of the Irish Land Purchase Company, of which Mr. Charles Stewart Parnell was the Chairman.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): What company does the hon. Member say?

MR. T. M. HEALY: What did Mr. Parnell get out of it? Did he ever receive a farthing fee?

(1.41.) MR. W. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Newington, W.): I do not know whether, if the Amendment is pressed to a Division, the right hon. Gentleman opposite intends to vote for it.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I said I objected to it.

MR. COOKE: I regard the Amendment as being open to the greatest possible objection. People expect to carry on their businesses according to the law existing at the time those businesses were started, and no business at all would be started if it were considered possible that laws of a totally different, and of a destructive, character could be established after the business had been commenced. That is the real and fundamental objection to the Amendment. However objectionable may have been the conduct of certain promoters and Directors, few people would desire to produce so disastrous a state of things as would be brought about if this Amendment were to be accepted. After all, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the tendency of modern times is in the direction of large industries being carried on by means of companies. It is quite possible that in the transference of a business from a private individual to a company, the individual obtains more for his business than it is worth. But after all, it is the active principle of business to sell what you have for more than it is worth. If you sap that principle you will destroy the mainspring of human industry. I do not believe that the hon. and learned Member for Longford, from the tone of his remarks, is in earnest in moving this Amendment, and probably, having made his caustic remarks upon hon. Members who are Directors, he will be satisfied and withdraw the Amendment.

*(1.40.) THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): I hope that the hon. and learned Member for Longford will be satisfied with having raised this interesting discussion, and will withdraw his Amend-

ment. Your ruling, Sir, renders it impossible for me to enter into the question of whether the greater portion of the losses which have occurred to investors during recent years have been due to the dishonesty of Directors or the folly of shareholders. Hon. and learned Members from Ireland will be aware that this is a branch of law I have had a great deal to do with in that country, and I must say my experience has led me to the conclusion that there is scarcely any branch of the law which could be more usefully dealt with for the protection of the general public. I say this without any invective against Directors or statement as to how these unfortunate losses have occurred. The result of my experience—such as it has been—is this, that the public require additional protection in this matter, and, therefore, I think our thanks are due to the hon. and learned Gentleman who has introduced this Bill. But, having come to the conclusion that the general investing public require protection, I must say I object to the highly penal provisions of this measure being made retrospective. Having decided to attach penal consequences to a certain course of action on the part of Directors, you should proceed with your legislation in the ordinary way, and not adopt an exceptional—and more than that, an unprecedented—course of legislation in this particular instance. Very properly the provisions of the Bill are highly penal. But this very consideration creates an insuperable objection to the proposal in the Amendment, for there is no parallel for legislation of this kind being made retrospective. I trust the hon. and learned Member will rest satisfied with the discussion he has raised and will not press his Amendment.

(1.46.) MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): I think those who oppose the Amendment proceed on a complete misapprehension as to its scope. Obviously, if it created a new moral obligation, we should all vote against it, and I am sure my hon. and learned Friend would never make such an unjust proposal; but the Amendment does not propose to create any new obligation whatever. I am sure the right hon. and learned Gentleman who has just addressed the House would not for a moment urge that, up to the present, Directors have been morally entitled to mislead the public, and to lend their names to prospectuses, and father statements which they knew —or ought to have known—to be untrue. They have always been, at least, morally bound to act with prudence in investigating the statements they have been asked to give to the public, and all this Bill proposes to do is to render them liable to attach some money meaning to that responsibility. It creates no new responsibility, but merely gives an effective means of enforcing the responsibility which has always existed. As to its being unusual to pass retrospective legislation, this House constantly passes Bills which affect contracts already entered into between private persons. And I would point out that the Bill does not propose to give a criminal remedy against a fraudulent Director, but merely a civil one; and why should hon. Gentlemen opposite object to such a remedy as that being enforced against rogues and thieves, for that is the only class of people who will be prejudicially affected. Your criminal legislation has been made retrospective on other occasions, notably in 1887, when you created artificial criminal offences in Ireland; why, therefore, should you not legislate retrospectively against fraudulent Directors?

*(1.50.) MR. SYDNEY GEDGE: I challenge the hon. Member who has just sat down to point to a single case in proof of his assertion that we have passed measures dealing retrospectively with offences in Ireland. It is true there has been retrospective legislation in regard to contracts. Retrospective action with regard to contracts has been adopted in two instances—once with regard to the Ground Game Act and once with respect to the Irish Land Bills. In both instances it was objected to by large parties in this House, and in the latter case was only adopted under the pressure of strong necessity in the case of the Irish tenants. I do not think we need go so far as to say that those who would be affected by these clauses would be necessarily rogues and thieves. As the clauses are drawn many men might be brought under them who had simply been careless. When the Act has been passed notice will have been given to Directors as to the matters which it makes illegal.

It is a very different thing to say a man shall be criminally responsible in face of a law which directs attention to his responsibility, and to say he shall be criminally responsible for carelessness for which at the time he could not be made responsible, and in reference to action committed in good faith. It is proposed that the clause shall affect prospectuses or notices issued not after the passing of the Act, but after the 1st of October, 1886. The earlier parts of the clause, however, relate to the time when the Act comes into operation; and, therefore, if the Amendment be adopted, we shall have a clause which is not couched in Queen's English, or even in Parliamentary English, and which is nonsensical on the face of it.

(1.54.) SIR G. CAMPBELL: I entirely agree in principle with this Amendment, and have not the least objection to put down wicked acts, but I cannot concur in the desirability of making the clause retrospective. An enormous number of Gentlemen inside and outside this House have followed the profession of "guinea-pigging," and I am afraid if this Amendmend were passed we should have a panic in the country, and the Kingdom would be almost depopulated.

(2.0.) The House divided:—Ayes 55; Noes 135.—(Div. List, No. 156.)

(2.21.) MR. WARMINGTON: I beg to propose to substitute "October" for "January" in line 16. I wish to make the Bill to come into operation on the 1st of October, 1890.

Amendment proposed, in Clause 4, page 2, line 16, to leave out the word "January," and insert the word "October."—*(Mr. Warmington.)*

Question put, and agreed to.

MR. WARMINGTON: I now beg to move to omit "one" after "ninety."

Amendment proposed, "To leave out the word 'one.'"

Question proposed, "That 'one' stand part of the Bill."

(2.23.) SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE: As I have an Amendment on the Paper that deals with the same point, it may expedite the progress we desire to make if I explain now why I put the Amendment down and why I do not propose to move it. The Amendment just moved fixes a certain date on which this Bill is to come into operation. It seems to me that it would be of advantage to the public interest, and especially to the interest of those great undertakings which are now in the hands of Limited Liability Companies if that date were somewhat postponed. It seems to me that the result of this Bill will be to effect a very great change in the *status* of future Directors of Limited Liability Companies. I am sure those who promote the Bill have the very best intentions, namely, the protection of the public. But the great danger in the case of Limited Liability Companies arises not so much from the action of fraudulent Directors as from that of fraudulent promoters, who are not touched by the Bill. The provisions of the Bill make such a great change in the responsibility of honest Directors who really act up to their lights and with the utmost honesty of intention, that I think it will be very difficult in the future to induce any men of position and reputation, who have anything to lose, to become connected with or responsible for the issue of new companies. It is undoubtedly a fact that large amounts of capital have already been laid out in the preparation of perfectly sound enterprises that would come into being if nothing happened to prevent them during the next few months or the next year. These schemes, I maintain, will in all probability be hopelessly ruined by the introduction of this Bill, because those noblemen and gentlemen who have allowed their names to be connected with them will undoubtedly withdraw from all association with them, and consequently it will be impossible to put the enterprises before the public. I think that this Bill may be described as a Bill for placing the future of limited liability in the hands of guinea-pigs and men of straw.

*MR. SPEAKER: The Amendment is to omit "ninety-one" for the purpose of inserting "ninety." The hon. Gentleman is hardly entitled to go into the matters he is dealing with.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE: Of course, Sir, I do not contest your ruling, but the point I wish to put before the House is that if a very early date be assigned for the operation of the Bill, it will imperil a large number of perfectly sound and legitimate enterprises that have been prepared for submission to the public because of the danger that must result to gentlemen who have allowed their names, or have intended to allow their names, to be associated with the prospectuses about to be issued. I submit that this may possibly be regarded as a reason why a very early date should not be fixed for the coming into operation of the Bill. I do not propose to move my Amendment, as I do not wish to obstruct the House in coming to a decision; but I urge these facts as a reason why the hon. Member should not fix too early a date for the coming into operation of the measure.

*Sir R. FOWLER (London): I am glad to hear the announcement that my hon. Friend does not intend to propose his Amendment. I am not very much in love with the Bill, for reasons I hope to state hereafter, and I have, therefore, voted on many occasions with my hon. Friend beside me. I think the hon. Member opposite has fixed very properly on the 1st of January, 1891, because I think, if the Bill is to become law, it would be a great mistake to defer the time at which it is to come into operation.

Sir ROPER LETHBRIDGE: The date now proposed is October, 1890.

*Sir R. FOWLER: I am sorry to hear of that alteration. It changes my view of the matter. At the same time if the date fixed were October, 1891, that would allow a large number of companies to be brought out, and would lead to things that might be very prejudicial.

Question put, and negatived.

Mr. WARMINGTON: Then I have to propose an Amendment at the desire of the President of the Board of Trade. I have submitted it to the right hon. Gentleman, and it has his approval.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the last Amendment, to insert the words "and shall only apply to prospectuses and notices issued after that date."—(*Mr. Warmington.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

(2.31.) Mr. T. M. HEALY: I think this Amendment most objectionable. We have heard from influential Members of the House what their objections are to the retrospective action of the Bill, and the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Warmington) has delivered himself of the opinion that it would be a hardship upon promoters and Directors to make the action of the Bill retrospective, but what does he now propose to do? He is going to give a kind of scapegoat period between the months of June and October within which frauds may continue. This Act would naturally take effect immediately after the Queen's Assent, but there is to be a close time for fraudulent Directors up to October, 1890. Well, I object to a close time for swindlers. Promoters, Directors, and everybody else have had long advertisement that this Act is about to be passed; but so tender is the hon. and learned Gentleman for those whom this Bill is to punish, that he proposes to allow the flow of a flood of felony between now and October. A more remarkable proposal I have never heard; it is a condemnation of the hon. and learned Gentleman's own Bill. I can understand his objection to my proposal to make the Act retrospective, but here he is branding his own Bill as a measure that is really not much wanted. He says, in effect, there is no need of hurry about it after all, and these poor guileless promoters should have time to run their merry rigs a little longer. I am amazed that the hon. and learned Gentleman should cast such a slur upon his own legislation, practically justifying the opposition of hon. Gentlemen opposite. "You are right," he says. "The Bill is objectionable, and there should be ample scope and verge enough" for these operations up to October 1 next, and this is assented to, practically, without debate. I suppose this is to allow the development of schemes now in process of incubation. Is this to be tolerated? Are we to wait for months, so that fraudulent proposals and prospectuses now, perhaps, in the printers' hands, can be put before the public? Really, I think this Bill has had from its own parent the most severe stab it could receive. Apparently the view of the hon. and learned Gentleman is that there should be a close time for fraud. You may commit a fraud on September 30, but not on October 1. Hon. Gentlemen opposite may date their prospectuses September 30, but not later.

MR. JOHNSTON: Does the hon. and learned Gentleman attribute to Members on this side the circulation of fraudulent prospectuses?

MR. T. M. HEALY: The hon. Gentleman is quite mistaken. I say anybody can issue a fraudulent prospectus on September 3 and is not to be struck at by this Act; but if he dates it October 1, then he renders himself liable to punishment. The hon. Member for South Belfast does not carry into public life that geniality we all recognise in his private capacity. He suggested a moment ago the Bill dating from 1881, but the case he put is of a wholly different character to those we have in contemplation in passing this Bill. The company formed for migration purposes was one from which no Director derived a penny. The Directors were mistaken perhaps, but they drew no fees; but this Bill does not touch such a case; it strikes at false and misleading statements issued. But I rose to protest against the suggestion that there should be a close time for fraud. I say the moment this Bill becomes an Act, let it come into operation. I deny that this is a Bill so unjust and harsh in its operation that any interval should be allowed.

*(2.36.) MR. BARING (London): I very much regret the introduction of words suspending the operation of the Bill until the 1st October. I think it should run from the passing of the Act, and all the more because we have heard from my hon. Friend near me that there are sundry noblemen and gentlemen who are considering whether their names shall appear on prospectuses now in preparation.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE: Not within my knowledge.

*MR. BARING: I thought my hon. Friend spoke of what he knew; but it seems he spoke of what he did not know. I think, looking at the serious nature of the evils with which the Bill is to deal, we ought not to give them what has been called a close time, but as soon as the Bill becomes law it should be enforced. I could not agree with the proposal to make penal legislation retrospective; but when we make penal legislation, it should come into force with the passing of the Act.

(2.37.) SIR W. HARCOURT: I quite agree in that view. I am against a close time of any description, whether for Directors or for hares. Certainly I cannot conceive any possible argument by which a measure of this kind, if it is justifiable at all, should not take effect as soon as Parliament has given assent to it. As I said before, in opposition to the retrospective Amendment, that it was a departure from Parliamentary usage, so I say in opposition to this Amendment that it is equally a departure from Parliamentary usuage without justification.

*MR. SPEAKER: I must remind the House that, as amended, the clause runs thus:—"This Act shall come into operation on the 1st of October, 1890."

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will it not be competent for us to vote against the clause as amended; and, the clause being struck out, the Act would come into operation at once?

*MR. SPEAKER: No; the proposal that the clause stand part of the Bill is made in Committee.

(2.38.) MR. SETON-KARR (St. Helen's): Are not the words now before us consequential upon the decision of the House that the Bill shall come into operation on October 1, and are they really necessary? The Bill does not apply to prospectuses issued before that date, or what is the meaning of the clause? If we have already passed the words declaring that the Bill shall come into operation on October 1, naturally the Bill cannot apply to prospectuses before that date.

*(2.38.) MR. SPEAKER: The House has passed the clause that this Act shall come into operation on October 1, 1890, and the Amendment now proposes that the Act shall only apply to prospectuses and notices issued after that date. The point is how to deal with notices issued between the passing of the Act and the date for the operation of the Act.

(2.39.) MR. T. M. HEALY: I assume, undoubtedly, that prospectuses issued meantime will be covered by the Act, but legal procedure can only be taken after October 1. Undoubtedly, as the clause stands, all bogus and improper prospectuses come under the Act as soon as it passes; but these proposed words will prevent that.

Mr. SETON-KARR: It seems to me that the Amendment is the natural consequence of what the House has accepted, and the hon. and learned Member's interpretation makes nonsense of the Bill. The Bill cannot apply to prospectuses issued before October 1, when we accept that is the date of the operation of the Act.

*(2.40.) Mr. G. OSBORNE MORGAN: As I understand it, the Bill comes into operation on October 1, and, that being so, no prospectus issued before that time would come within the operation of the Act. For operative purposes there is no Act until that date. It seems to me that the words proposed by my hon. and learned Friend are not required, and I really do not know why they are introduced. Can the right hon. Gentleman opposite give us any possible reason?

*(2.40.) The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Sir M. Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.): Of course, I cannot give a legal opinion. I expressed my view that the liabilities under the Bill should not attach to notices issued before the passing of the Bill. My right hon. and learned Friend near me informs me that the words are not necessary, and I do not see why they should be introduced.

*(2.41.) Mr. MADDEN: It appears to me that the House, having fixed the 1st of October as the commencement of the legal consequences that follow under the Act, the Amendment expresses the exact position and the legal consequence of fixing the commencement of the Act at that date. The words add nothing to the meaning, but, on the other hand, they are absolutely harmless.

*Mr. BARING: I rather wish to have words inserted applying the Act to prospectuses and notices issued between the passing of the Act and October 1.

Sir ROPER LETHBRIDGE: I submit, Sir, that after your ruling any further discussion is really little better than obstruction.

Mr. WARMINGTON: I do not myself think the words are necessary, and I am quite ready to withdraw the Amendment.

(2.42.) Mr. CHANCE: As bearing upon the present position, I may mention that the date of the issue of the prospectus is not the vital point, the date of subscription is the root of the action. If the Bill is allowed to go through as it now stands, the result will be that a person who subscribes to a company after this date, the promoters having issued their prospectus the day before the date, will have no action. The subscription gives the right of action, but there is no word in the Bill as to date of subscription; it is only provided that the Act shall come into existence on a certain day. It seems to me it would be well to have this matter defined in some better manner. We had better understand clearly whether the date of the prospectus, or the date of the subscription is the vital date in respect to the commencement of the action.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

(2.43.) Mr. T. M. HEALY: I now propose to add after the word "ninety" these words: "But this Act shall apply to all prospectuses and notices issued after the passing of this Act." The object these words would effect would be that, while no legal procedure can be adopted to punish promoters of a fraudulent character between now and October, yet the moment October arrives the legal machinery of this Act comes into operation for the punishment of anything of a fraudulent nature which may have taken place in the interval between the passing of the Act and that date. I am obliged for the suggestion to the hon. Member for the City (Mr. Baring.) He is a great authority on financial matters, and I am quite sure he will lend the weight of his authority to protect us against this close time for fraud, and to prevent the launching of dishonest schemes now on the stocks.

*(2.44.) Mr. SPEAKER: The House has agreed that the Act shall come into operation on October 1, 1890, and that operation refers to prospectuses and notices. What the hon. and learned Member now proposes amounts not to a limitation, but to a contradiction of what has already been agreed upon by applying the Act to all prospectuses and notices issued after the passing of the Act.

Mr. CHANCE: On a point of order, Sir. There is a difficulty as to the date upon which the Act shall come into operation, whether it shall be the date of prospectus or the date of subscription for shares. Perhaps the Attorney General for Ireland can explain that.

(2.45.) SIR W. HARCOURT: To contradict a provision previously laid down is of course not allowable; but, as I understand, the hon. and learned Member wishes to make an exception. Now, if we could not fix a date, and afterwards make an exception to it, we should not be able to legislate at all. We must fix a general date, though we may choose to make certain exceptions. If the hon. and learned Gentleman puts in the words "Except as to prospectuses and notices," &c., that would show that the reference is to a portion of these proceedings and not to the whole. Proceedings may not be instituted until October. We know there are cases continually where, in order to prevent evasions of an Act, you have to put in a clause to provide that there shall be no violation of the Act while discussion is going on. So here we shall be stultifying ourselves before the public if we pass an Act in a form allowing impunity to promoters during the months of July, August, and September. What possible reason is there for allowing such a thing? It is possible, I submit, to make exceptions, and I think we ought to do it here to maintain our credit for common sense.

*(2.47.) SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The argument of the right hon. Gentleman is addressed to a point which has already been decided. He desires that the Act shall come into force immediately on its passing, but the House has decided it shall come into force on October 1. If we were now to put in words to provide that prospectuses issued between the passing of the Act and October 1 should render the issuers liable to the penalties provided that would be anticipating the date already fixed, and would be directly contrary to what has already been done.

(2.48.) MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): I was about to urge the same point. It is not a question of policy or prudence or good sense. If it is nonsensical, fortunately there is another branch of the Legislature where it can be put right. It is a matter of order; the words have been passed declaring the Act comes into operation on October 1, and the words of the Act are to be read as if spoken by the Legislature on that day.

SIR W. HARCOURT: There may be exceptions.

MR. COURTNEY: The gist of the Bill is Clause 3, which declares that certain statements shall be followed by certain consequences. It is further declared that the Act shall come into operation on October 1, and the proposed Amendment is a direct contradiction, declaring that the operation shall be immediate.

(2.49.) MR. SEXTON: Could my right hon. Friend move his Amendment as regards prospectuses or notices, not as regards both? Directed to both it would be a contradiction, but not to the one or the other.

*MR. SPEAKER: The proper time to raise the point would have been when the hon. and learned Gentleman moved October 1, 1890, as the date for the operation of the Act. To say now that the operation of the Act shall be from the date of its passing will be to virtually contradict what has been passed by the House. I am afraid there is no remedy at this stage.

(2.50.) MR. T. M. HEALY: I appreciate entirely, Sir, the force of what you say; and I will, on the Motion for Third Reading, move the re-committal of the Bill to omit this clause, and I presume that in this I shall have the assent of the President of the Board of Trade.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be set down for Third Reading on Wednesday."—(*Mr. Warmington.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to give notice that, on the Motion for Third Reading, I shall move to re-commit the Bill in order to strike out the entire clause, and this will have the effect of making the Act speak as from the day it receives the Royal Assent.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill to be read the third time upon Wednesday next.

ORCHARDS RATING EXEMPTION BILL.
(No. 177.)

Bill, as amended, considered; read the third time, and passed.

PHARMACY ACT (IRELAND) (1875) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 241.)

Bill, as amended, considered.

MR. SEXTON: I regret to move the Adjournment of the Debate; but, under the circumstances, I hope it will be accepted. It will be observed that all the Amendments to the Bill stand in my name——

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member should formally move an Amendment before I put a Motion for Adjournment.

Clause (First election of representatives of chemists and druggists to council,)—(*Mr. Sexton,*)—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY: I am surprised that the hon. Member for South Belfast, with whom I thought we had a perfect understanding, should wish to proceed with the Bill now. We assented to the Bill passing Committee, making a *pro formâ* Amendment in order that there should be a Report stage, with the object of coming to an agreement between the chemists and the Pharmaceutical Society. Of course, it would not be right to refer to private conversation in reference to a public matter; but we did understand that the hon. Gentleman was willing to postpone the Bill, and it was our influence secured the passage of the Bill through Committee. We are not hostile to the Bill; we only desire to give effect to an arrangement which we hope may be arrived at with the Pharmaceutical Society—to reconcile conflicting interests. It is with that object that I now move the adjournment.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

*MR. MADDEN: I hope my hon. Friend will accept the Motion. There are only a few remaining points of difference to be settled between the parties referred to, and, in fact, time will be saved by a present postponement. I hope that the points of difference will become fewer in the interval, and when the Bill comes on again, an arrangement will have been arrived at, and there will be no opposition to this useful Bill becoming law.

MR. JOHNSTON: It is but a reasonable proposition, and I accept it.

Question put, and agreed to.

Question proposed, "That the consideration of the Bill be resumed on Monday."—(*Mr. Johnston.*)

MR. SEXTON: I would observe that the Bill is entitled to a certain priority of position if set down for a private Members' day; but on Government days it will be blocked by the 12 o'clock Rule. I would, therefore, suggest that it be taken on Wednesday next.

MR. JOHNSTON: I am quite willing, but I thought it was the wish of hon. Members to take it on Monday.

Debate adjourned till Wednesday next.

INTESTATES' ESTATES BILL.—(No. 59.)

Bill considered in Committee, and reported without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

HARES PRESERVATION BILL [LORDS].

(NO. 187.) COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 2.

*(3.12.) MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.): I desire to move the Amendment which stands in my name, and, in doing so, desire to say that I have no objection to the preservation of hares in the close season, but I think it is rather strong action for the House of Commons to enact that any farmer who kills a hare during a close season for the protection of his crops should be guilty of a criminal offence. My Amendment would protect the farmers from this hardship, while destroying the interest of the poacher and trader in the killing of hares during close season. The farmer has no means of defending his crops against the ravages of these creatures except by killing them; and surely it is unreasonable that his doing so in close time should be a penal act. I have no sympathy with poachers and dealers who kill at this season for purposes of profit, nor do I think that sporting interests should weigh against the practical interest of the farmer. Kindliness to dumb creatures I recog-

nise; but it is a sentiment that does not apply to circumstances where these creatures are preserved to the loss of the farmer in order that, in the coursing season, they may be run down and killed under circumstances of the greatest cruelty. I think the desired object will be secured by taking away the incentive to kill during the close season for purposes of profit; but I hope the common-sense of the Committee will recognise the justice of allowing the farmer to take the necessary steps to protect his crops from the ravages of these animals.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 12, to leave out all the words after the word "shall," to the word "or," in line 15, and insert the words "sell, offer for sale for money, or any other consideration whatever, any hare or leveret."—(*Mr. Esslemont.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'wilfully kill' stand part of the Clause."

(3.16.) COLONEL DAWNAY (York, N.R., Thirsk): I can assure the Committee that, so far from wishing to overthrow the principle of the Ground Game Act of 1880, the promoters of the Bill wish to affirm that principle and to secure to the farmers the privilege granted by that Act, which is now in danger of vanishing altogether. Since the Ground Game Act of 1880 hares have been slaughtered in season and out of season, so much so that in many parts of the country they have almost become extinct. Parliament has passed laws to protect sea birds, singing birds, and even coarse fish; and yet the hare, which is a valuable article of food, and the most defenceless of all British wild animals, is slaughtered all the year round, and at a time when it is totally unfit for food, and when the death of a doe hare involves the lingering death by starvation of one or two leverets. In the market towns of England, Scotland, and Ireland one may often see in the spring time exposed for sale a doe hare dripping with milk or big with young, and by her side wretched leverets no bigger than rats. It is to stop this barbarous cruelty and this wanton waste of food that this Bill is brought in. I hope the Amendment will not be accepted, because, if it is, the Bill will not be worth the paper it is printed on.

(3.18.) SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I waited with interest to know the opinion of Her Majesty's Government on a question affecting the sport and agriculture of the country, and I find the Government represented on this occasion by the Attorney General, and I suppose he is prepared to answer for both. It would have been interesting to see the Minister for Agriculture here, but I suppose his presence is inconvenient, because in 1880, on the Hares Bill, he spoke very strongly, and voted against this very proposition. With every respect for what my hon. Friend says, the Bill does contravene directly the principle of the Act of 1880, which is that the occupier of the land shall deal as he chooses with the ground game for the protection of his crops. Hares are very destructive animals, and the Bill would protect them just when their ravages are at the worst.

SIR H. SELWIN-IBBETSON (Essex, Epping): No.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Can the right hon. Gentleman maintain that hares do no injury to growing crops from March to July? I have the greatest respect for the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman on agricultural matters, but I can only suppose he can maintain such a proposition on the assumption that all the land in Essex has gone out of cultivation. To say that hares do not commit ravages upon crops in these months is to make an assertion every farmer would laugh at. What, too, becomes of all the recommendations that farmers should turn their attention to raising vegetables? It is the very period when hares ought not to be preserved. I can give an authority for that in the person of a former colleague of the right hon. Gentleman. In 1880, Colonel Ruggles-Brise, a gentleman of great experience in agriculture, proposed that the occupier should be allowed to kill rabbits at all seasons, and to kill and take hares during the months of February, March, and April. The proposal of Colonel Ruggles-Brise was not to allow hares to be killed at other times, but in the months of February, March, and April, because this was the period in which hares are most destructive to the crops of the farmer; and in his speech on that occasion he declared his opinion that a close time for hares was not necessary. On the same occasion the Minister for Agriculture spoke, and he said if ever the operation of farmers were to undergo a change and market gardening should prevail all over the country, which he did not believe would ever be the case, the objections to the Amendment would be reasonable; but he thought it was undesirable to apply to the whole Bill that which should only apply to exceptional cases. Mr. Rodwell, another Representative of the Eastern Counties, and, as many hon. Members know, a great sportsman, expressed an opinion that it was impossible to fix any close time for hares. After that proposal, another was made almost similar to the proposal before the House now, and the present Minister for Agriculture spoke strongly against this proposal and also voted against it. Lord Elcho, the present Lord Wemyss, put the case in a nutshell when he said—

> "If this is a Bill for the preservation of sport, nothing is more reasonable than a close time; but if it is a Bill to promote good husbandry, there should be no close time."

That Amendment was defeated in 1880 by 148 to 58, the right hon. Gentleman and his County Member friends voting in the majority. It is idle for my hon. Friend to say the Bill is not intended to contravene the Act of 1880; it is intended to overthrow it root and branch. The Preamble of that Act gives occupiers the right to protect their crops against the ravages of ground game, and it is in the spring time when crops are coming up that the gnawing down by these animals is most injurious. The desire of country gentlemen to promote the multiplication of hares is interesting, for it shows that agriculture is very flourishing; that crops are so good and prices so high that more hares to eat the crops are desirable lest the farmer should become too prosperous. We have a Conservative Party in Office which has the agricultural interest of the country at heart, and a Minister specially charged with the care of that interest. Why, Sir, they brought under our notice the question of bi-metallism; they then introduced a Tithe Bill for the farmers and country gentlemen; and, in the third place——

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I rise to a point of order. I have to ask you, Sir, whether the introduction of the subject of Bi-metallism and the Tithes Bill has anything to do with a measure to provide a close time for hares?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I am only using these matters by way of illustrating my contention than the only practical measure of relief for the agricultural interest introduced by Her Majesty's Government this Session is a Bill giving a close time for hares. This, no doubt, is a measure that will be satisfactory to the large farmers and wealthy landowners who are desirous of preserving hares for sport. They say there are too few at present, and it is desirable that they should have more. But I may be allowed to say a word or two for another class who are not rolling in wealth. I allude to the small holders—the men you profess to have so much interest in and to desire to protect. Although the great owners and large farmers may be overwhelmed with prosperity—although the farmers of Lincolnshire may be longing for more hares, I must remind the House that, although the Minister for Agriculture has said that market gardening is a thing to be looked down upon, and that it would never extend largely in England, we on this side differ from that opinion, and both hope and believe there will be a great extension of this industry, to which the ravages caused by ground game are a source of very serious injury. The whole of a market gardener's crops may be destroyed by hares, and consequently the question is a serious one. It is, therefore, from this point of view that the Bill ought to be regarded. The question of a few hundred pounds more or less may not be a matter of great importance to the great Lincolnshire farmers, but the question of a few shillings may be the means of determining whether a small holder can maintain his allotment or not. It is upon this issue that the Bill must be judged. In point of fact, everybody knows that this Bill is not one which is really intended to affect the interest of agriculture. It is a sportsman's Bill——

THE CHAIRMAN: I would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that we are not discussing the Second Reading of the Bill, but an Amendment dealing with the question of selling hares.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Very well, Sir; I will reserve what I have to say on that point until the proper time has arrived. But I may remind the Committee that there really has been no Second Reading Debate on this Bill at all. The Bill has been pushed—I might almost say smuggled — through the House in the small hours of the morning, and if Bills of this kind are to be passed without any discussion on their merits it will not increase the confidence with which they are regarded. With regard to the question of selling hares, that is directly connected with the subject of the food of the people. The selling of hares depends upon the supply, and I, for one, absolutely deny the statement that there is anything like a scarcity of hares in this country. ["Oh, oh!"] Hon. Members who deny this should state their reasons. I may inform the Committee that when in the North, not many months ago, I was at a place where there had been a big day's sport, and there was a good deal of talk about the number of pheasants they had killed. I said, "I do not want to know anything about the pheasants; tell me about the hares. How many did you kill?" They told me 338.

THE MARQUESS OF CARMARTHEN (Lambeth, Brixton): Will the right hon. Gentleman state where this occurred?

SIR W. HARCOURT: Yes, at Lord Durham's. But I should not have mentioned the name had it not been asked for. The question is, are there sufficient hares in the country or are there not? I remember saying to a friend of mine "What do you think of killing upwards of 300 hares in a day?" and he replied, "Well, we can all do that." I say, therefore, if you can all do that, what nonsense it is to say the hare is an extinct animal. You cannot go and kill 300 dodos in a day, and your position as to hares is ridiculous. I have inquired also of a great many friends of mine who indulge in sport in a moderate way, who tell me there is no difficulty round Windsor and in the neighbourhood of London in getting as many hares as they want. I will tell you what this Bill is for, and everybody here knows it. It is because at present the tenant farmers of England do not produce sufficient hares to supply the coursing meetings. As regards the insufficient supply for other purposes, I absolutely deny the statement. In the neighbourhood where I live I asked a gentleman whether he found a scarcity of hares, and his reply was, "Not at all." It is only where the preservation of ground game is seriously abused that the tenant farmers take advantage of the Ground Game Act, and destroy the hares. You may buy as many hares at the poulterers as ever. I know quite as much about the poulterers' shops as hon. Members opposite, as I have made it my business to study this subject scientifically. There is a large poulterer in London with whom I deal, and through whose means I have eaten through all the hares of Europe. I can tell my hon. Friend opposite that he may buy as many hares as he liked. I have bought a large hare, weighing 12lbs., for 2s. Surely that is cheap food. ["Oh, oh!"] Hon. Members say "Oh." It was a Russian hare. I will not affirm that it was very good, but it was nourishing. It is nonsense to say you must be able to eat up the crops of the small gardeners and allotment holders in order to provide food for the people, when it is a well-known fact that foreign hares come into our markets from America, Belgium, Russia, Austria, and Hungary by hundreds of thousands, and they are just as good hares as our English hares. ["No!"] Well, that is a matter of taste. I have eaten Russian hares, Austrian hares, and Hungarian hares, and they are exactly the same as the English hares. Therefore, all this outcry about the food of the people is sheer nonsence, and everybody knows it.

COLONEL DAWNAY: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon, but he has mistaken our point. We say that the killing of doe hares in milk, and when unfit for food, is brutality, and our aim is to stop that brutality by means of this measure.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Brutality! That, it seems, is the only point the sporting gentlemen care about. We can all understand the kindly heartedness which sees a hare torn to pieces by greyhounds for sport—the humanity of those who hear the screams of the wounded hare at the cover side, and yet are shocked at the brutality of shooting the animal. To my mind, one of the most shocking things I know of is to hear the screaming of a wounded hare, but hon. Members opposite want more hares to scream, and nothing shows this more than the interruption of the hon. Gentleman. I would ask him how many doe hares are there with young in the month of July? I wonder that hon. Gentlemen can endeavour to persuade the House to extend protection to hares on so preposterous a proposition. Do hon. Gentlemen on the other side assert that July is a month in which hares are generally with young? Everybody knows that July is the month in which we eat leverets.

COLONEL DAWNAY: Hares are bred from the end of February to the beginning of August.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Will the hon. Member say that August is a brood month for hares?

COLONEL DAWNAY: I said from February to the beginning of August, but, of course, they mostly breed in March and April.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I only wanted to see how far these sporting gentlemen would go. Everybody knows the phrase "Mad as a March hare," and really some hon. Members in their zeal in this Bill seem to resemble March hares.

MR. WHARTON (Ripon): The Bill only proposes protection up to the 1st of July. We are not now dealing with July.

SIR W. HARCOURT: If the right hon. Gentleman the Minister for Agriculture will stand at the Table, and say June is a breeding month for hares, I shall be bound to believe him, and also to believe the Pope on a question of dogma. I say that this is not a Bill for promoting the sale of hares as food. It is a Bill for the promotion of coursing meetings, where bags of hares are turned out to be run down by dogs. I should like to hear whether the Minister of Agriculture is prepared vehemently to support this Bill. I want to hear his statement of the views entertained by the Government on the subject. For my part, I am speaking in the interests of the holders of allotments and small farms. Everybody knows that the question affecting hares differs totally from the question of rabbits——

Sir W. Harcourt

MR. CHAPLIN: I rise to order. I must ask you, Mr. Courtney, whether the speech of the right hon. Gentleman is directed to the Amendment, which is simply to insert hares that are sold instead of hares being killed. Is not this in reality a Second Reading speech?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I submit, Sir, that the question of selling hares relates to the production of hares, and, therefore, I am entitled to argue whether or not there is an increase of the hares that are to be sold.

THE CHAIRMAN: The whole argument so far has been directed to the offence of selling and not the offence of killing, and should be confined to that question.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I do not exactly understand the distinction. I should imagine, according to the old precept, "You must first catch your hare," the selling of hares has relation to the catching of hares, and the principal question is: Are there enough hares to catch in order that they may be sold. I hold that there are abundance of hares in this country for all legitimate purposes; that this Bill is a sportsman's Bill, which will inflict injustice on the small occupiers throughout the Kingdom, by depriving them of the right to kill hares on their own property, and to sell them, and, under these circumstances, I support the Amendment of my hon. Friend.

*(3.50.) THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): After a speech of nearly half an hour just delivered by the right hon. Gentleman, I will only detain the House a few moments, confining myself to such of his remarks as were relevant to the Amendment. I should not have troubled the House but for the somewhat sneering observations at the commencement of the right hon. Gentleman's speech. I do not see why the Attorney General should not express his opinion on this matter as well as an ex-Solicitor General or ex-Home Secretary, and certainly after the speech we have just heard I should not have the slightest objection to enter into a competitive examination with the right hon. Gentleman either in natural history or agriculture. One of the main arguments of the right hon. Gentleman has been that market gardens will spread, and that

hares will eat up the produce. I think that the right hon. Gentleman might have read the Bill.

Sir W. HARCOURT: I never said market gardens; I said small holdings.

*Sir R. WEBSTER: I took down the right hon. Gentleman's words myself, and I am in the recollection of those who heard the earlier part of the right hon Gentleman's speech, in which he referred to market gardens. He quoted a speech from *Hansard* in which my right hon. Friend referred to market gardens. Such is the memory of the right hon. Gentleman! He does not remember what he said a few minutes ago. There is a distinct provision in the Bill that it should not apply to hares and leverets inside nursery or other gardens, and, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman's observation——

Sir W. HARCOURT: I never made it.

*Sir R. WEBSTER: I cannot accept the denial of the right hon. Gentleman.

Sir W. HARCOURT: Very good. Then I say you violate the courtesy of the House.

*Sir R. WEBSTER: It is a matter of recollection to those who have been in the House during the last half-hour.

Sir W. HARCOURT: I never referred to market gardens, except so far as the words were included in the quotation. No statement of my own I gave referred to anything except small holdings.

*Sir R. WEBSTER: I am unable to accept the recollection of the right hon. Gentleman, but I will not continue to debate the matter. The point which we are now discussing is whether or not hares are to be sold, and we have heard a great deal of useful information about the breeding time of hares. The Bill only proposes a close time up to the 1st of July, so that the right hon. Gentleman has not even read the Bill. Does the right hon. Gentleman deny that during those months doe hares are with young, and that young hares, when the mother is killed, often die a cruel and lingering death without doing good to anyone? The right hon. Gentleman has told us that he has eaten Russian hares, and that they are quite as good as English hares—and apparently they must be most nourishing food, but I do not think that in his own house, at all events, the right hon. Gentleman would eat a doe hare killed in March or April, or if he did he would not do it a second time. Then we have heard about the seeds coming up. As a matter of fact, nine-tenths of the wheat comes up in the autumn. Perhaps in his part of the country crops come up at a different time. The right hon. Gentleman says that this Bill is a direct infraction of the Ground Game Act during particular months. There might be something in his argument, but for 8½ months in the year the farmer is free to shoot and catch hares, and I ask, is there anyone who will deny that if the farmer wishes to keep the hares down he cannot do it in those 8½ months? As I understand it, there is no complaint on the part of tenant farmers at not being allowed to kill hares during the proposed close time. The right hon. Gentleman has told us of his distinguished friends who have killed large bags of hares, but the right hon. Gentleman has not given his personal experience of the agricultural counties, where there are large numbers of tenants occupying the land without large preserves. I apologise for intruding on the House, feeling, as I do, that I ought not to have addressed it, having regard to the observations of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. I hope and trust that the Amendment will be discussed on its merits, and that those topics which have no bearing upon the matter will not be gone into.

*(4.2.) Sir J. PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle): I hope it is not difficult to discuss a question of this kind without warmth even on such a warm day. I desire to say that in supporting this Bill I am only carrying out the views of agriculturists in my own neighbourhood. It does not repeal a single word of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby's Bill. I have taken no part out of the House in the agitation on this question, but I am familiar with agriculture in my own part of the country, and I know that in the wide district of the North-Riding of Yorkshire, known as the Cleveland district, every farmer but one supports the Bill—and the exception is a coursing man who wants the power of killing hares all the year round. There are good reasons for supporting the provisions of the Bill. They will not

cause the farmer any inconvenience, for with a close time, commencing 15th of March or 1st of April, he will have ample time during the period when hares ought to be killed, in which to destroy every hare that is likely to prey on his crops. I venture to say that on any farm within seven days of the 15th of March you could put down every surplus hare you are not desirous of having there. This seems to me a very simple and natural Bill, commending itself to every naturalist and every humanitarian. It is really the best compliment that could be paid to the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, because it shows that the right hon. Gentleman's Bill has worked so hardly on hares as almost to cause them in many places to become extinct.

(4.4.) SIR H. SELWIN-IBBETSON: After the speech we have just listened to I do not suppose I should have troubled the House with any remarks on the question if it had not been for the very pointed reference made to me by the right hon. Gentleman on the Front Bench opposite. I will not, after your ruling, Sir, follow the right hon. Gentleman's discursive speech, but I may say that what struck me more than anything else in that speech was that the New Forest must be a very happy hunting ground, because the right hon. Gentleman's experience of it enables him to set his knowledge of agriculture and field sports, and his views not only of agriculturalists but of small holders generally throughout the country, against the opinion of everybody else. Speaking now for a very large body of agriculturists in the county of Essex, I can say that the Bill is a very necessary one, if any hares are to be preserved. I do not wish to enter into competition with the right hon. Gentleman opposite in legal knowledge, but, seeing that I have the misfortune to hold in my own hands 1,600 to 2,000 acres of land, I think I may place my experience in agricultural matters against that of the right hon. Gentleman. The months mentioned in the Bill, which have been pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman as the months in which the greatest damage to crops will ensue, are not looked upon in that light by agriculturists generally. We have, at least, an

equal knowledge with the right hon. Gentleman of the rotation of crops, and also of their growth, and we have had experience of the time when they are most destroyed, and I venture to say that the months selected by the right hon. Gentleman are not those in which most damage is done.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The months I quoted were those mentioned by Colonel Ruggles-Brise.

SIR H. SELWIN-IBBETSON: When Colonel Ruggles-Brise expressed his opinion he was speaking from the point of view of the opposition that was raised to an Amendment. Remember that the proposal of the Bill had not been tried by the country, and I venture to say that if Colonel Ruggles-Brise were now in the House, he would agree with me in the view I am expressing as to the opinion of the farmers of Essex. Agriculturists have had experience of the Act of the right hon. Gentleman, and they have come to the conclusion that that Act has practically destroyed a species of game to which farmers attach considerable importance. No doubt, in the days before the passing of that Act, farmers who looked upon hares as the property of the landlords regarded them with considerable jealousy, but now that they have the power of dealing with that property themselves they are quite as much in favour of the alteration in the law now proposed as the landlords. I confess I admired the knowledge the right hon. Gentleman had acquired from the poulterers' shops, but allow me to say that although we may have most delicious hares imported from foreign countries, there is no denying the fact that in this country the hare is practically becoming extinct, certainly all over the counties of which I have any knowledge, and I venture to say that the price of hares in the market will fully confirm that view. If the Amendment is passed the Bill will have no effect in checking the destruction of hares at the time when they ought to be protected. By this Bill you will not deprive the farmer of any opportunity he may wish to have of destroying these animals, and I am certain that the farmers of the country will infinitely prefer that the Bill should pass in its entirety than that it should be mutilated by this Amendment.

*(4.13.) MR. BARCLAY (Forfarshire): No doubt the Bill is a violation of the compromise arrived at on the passing of the Ground Game Act, when, on the one hand, the farmer obtained the right to kill hares and rabbits all the year round, and, on the other hand, certain restrictions were imposed upon his mode of killing him—which restrictions have proved very inconvenient, especially in the case of rabbits. To a certain extent I sympathise with the Bill, but I do not think there is really any scarcity of hares, though that is one of the chief arguments adduced for opposing the Amendment. I do not think that the price of hares is sensibly higher than before the Ground Game Act was passed. There is no doubt that in some parts of the country hares are now as plentiful as ever they were, or, at least, as plentiful as they should be, whilst in other parts they, no doubt, are scarce. They always were scarce in some places. It does not always depend upon the killing as to the number of hares there are in a district, but the food there is for them. The Amendment meets the case of hares being with young being exposed in poulterers' shops. Such an abuse will be prohibited if the Amendment is adopted, and I think the hon. Member in charge of the Bill would do well to accept the proposal. The Game Acts will deal with the case of poachers and unauthorised persons. If the large farmers want to preserve hares they can do so. Let them prevent poachers from trespassing on their lands; and as to the smaller farmers, I am convinced they do not want this Bill. They do not like to be interfered with by a new Game Act. I hope the hon. Member in charge of the Bill will be disposed to accept the Amendment. I think it meets the case, and will prevent hares from being exposed in shops during the breeding season. As far as the cultivators of farms are concerned, I think they have power enough to preserve hares to the extent they desire.

(4.19.) MR. CHAPLIN: I wish to say a few words in support of the very moderate and reasonable speech addressed to the House by my right hon. Friend the Member for Essex (Sir H. Selwin-Ibbetson), because I think the great majority of the House is in favour of making progress with the Bill, and of passing it into law as soon as possible. I do not intend to quarrel with the character or motives of the speech delivered by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) or to deal with the various topics he raised, although I am bound to say it offers a most tempting theme for discussion. The right hon. Gentleman questioned altogether the accuracy of my hon. and learned Friend's (the Attorney General's) recollection as to the fact that the right hon. Gentleman introduced into his speech arguments in support of market gardens. I may say I took down his words at the time, and I turned to my hon. and learned Friend, and said, "Half his argument is entirely answered by the Bill itself, because Clause 1 provides that the measure shall not apply to nurseries or other gardens."

SIR W. HARCOURT: If the right hon. Gentleman will excuse me, he will see I have put down on the Paper an Amendment to add to the word "gardens" the words "small holdings."

MR. CHAPLIN: I do not know what the right hon. Gentleman meant, but, in justice to my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General, I felt bound to tell the Committee what took place. This is a Bill to provide a close time for hares. The Amendment which has been moved would, in my opinion, only have the effect of making the Bill considerably weaker than it is at present. The right hon. Gentleman supported the Amendment, he said, in the interest of the farmers, and the hon. Member who has just sat down expressed the opinion that, in the view, at all events, of the small farmers the Bill is objectionable. I do not know the grounds on which the hon. Member has formed that opinion, but I have endeavoured to ascertain the opinions of farmers of all descriptions, and I find precisely the opposite view prevailing. I believe there is a very general desire that the Bill should pass without material alteration. Farmers now enjoy the right of killing hares, and, very naturally, do not wish that they should become extinct—a consummation which does not appear to be very far distant at the present time in many parts of the country. Surely, this is a very reasonable and moderate Bill, and, whether we agree or disagree with it, I think we have a right to ask that the Amendments may be discussed in a reasonable, concise, and business-like manner, and that Members who oppose the Bill will not resort to those reprehensible tactics to which recourse is sometimes had for the purpose of defeating Bills. With reference to the argument that crops will be damaged during the proposed close time, it is enough to point out that the present Amendment would not obviate the possibility of such damage. There are other Amendments on the Paper which, I think, are very fully deserving of consideration, and to which I am sure Gentlemen sitting behind me will give full consideration. Under these circumstances I hope the right hon. Gentleman (Sir W. Harcourt) will re-consider his position and use his great influence for the purpose of inducing his friends to consider the Bill in a fair and reasonable manner.

(4.25.) MR. GURDON (Norfolk, Mid): In my part of the country I believe the Bill is supported by owners of land, occupiers of land, agricultural labourers, and even those other gentlemen who live by taking hares in an indirect way. In fact, the feeling in favour of the Bill is practically unanimous. We do not entirely agree with the limits of the close time fixed in the Bill, and I certainly should have liked to see adopted an Amendment which was placed on the Paper, but has been withdrawn, for leaving the counties to fix the close time for themselves. I hope, however, the House will accept the Bill.

(4.26.) DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): During the last few months I have tried by visiting various poulterers' shops in London to find out whether it is true that hares are exposed for sale when in milk. I have been told at shop after shop that such a thing is never seen, and that the credit of any poulterer who did it would be absolutely destroyed. Accordingly, if any poulterers are engaged in this practice, I think they will certainly not be a good class of tradesmen, and I think that the Amendment standing in the name of the hon. Member for Aberdeeen (Mr. Esslemont) ought to meet with the complete assent of Members on both sides of the House. What is the use of inserting the words, "shall wilfully kill"? If you meet poachers in the country with hares in their possession, can you say they have wilfully killed them? Some one else may have done it. What you should do is to saddle the right horse by making it illegal for a tradesman to sell a hare that is in young or has recently been in young. For my own part, I think there is a great deal too much fuss made about this matter. I can easily understand sporting gentlemen who take a pleasure in coursing—which I consider to be a very cruel sport—doing their best to promote the multiplication of hares. Practically speaking, hares are cheaper in this country than they are in Ireland. Although this very law exists in Ireland in a greater degree than you are now trying to impose it on England, hares are to-day cheaper in London than in Dublin or Cork. I agree with the remarks made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) about hares eating the green crops in Spring, and I certainly do not see why cultivators of the soil should not kill hares at that time. Hon. Members opposite will, in my oppinion, do wisely if they accept this Amendment, with the exception of one word in it—I mean the word "leveret." I do not think people will expose leverets for sale when very young. If a leveret be two months old I do not see why it should not be sold or why it should not be legally killed.

THE CHAIRMAN: The question whether leverets should be included will come up for discussion subsequently.

DR. TANNER: I shall certainly oppose the Bill unless the principle embodied in the Amendment of my hon. Friend is adopted.

(4.35.) SIR J. KENNAWAY (Devon, Honiton): It is said this measure is not desired by small farmers. I come from a county of small farmers, and a few months ago I had the honour of presenting a Petition to the House signed by between 7,000 and 8,000 persons connected with the land, in favour of this Bill. Amongst the petitioners were landowners, large farmers, small farmers, and labourers. It has been asked, Why cannot those who wish to see a stop put to the shooting or killing of hares agree not to destroy hares? The fact is, that when a man sees his neighbour killing hares, he does not like to be placed under a disability not to kill them; it is hard for him to restrain himself. With reference to the speech of the hon. Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) I may point out there is an Act for the Preservation of Hares in Ireland. That Act was passed in 1879, and it enacts that any person who wilfully kills or wounds a hare between a given period shall forfeit for every such hare a sum of money not exceeding £1.

(4.37.) Sir W. HARCOURT: I will not detain the Committee at any length, but I must remind the hon. Baronet that the Irish Act which had just been passed was fully in mind at the time the Ground Game Act was passed in 1880. This is a question for small owners; the large men can take care of themselves. The hon. Baronet says he represents small holders, but he seems to have a strange opinion of the moral strength of small holders. He says small holders are anxious to preserve the hares, but they will not combine not to kill them for fear their neighbours might kill them.

Sir J. KENNAWAY: I did not say that. I said that if one man sees another killing hares it is difficult for him to restrain himself.

Sir W. HARCOURT: If one man does what he ought not to do all the rest of the Devonshire people will do so! I should be sorry to say that of my constituents. I should have thought that if one man kills hares when the rest of the farmers wish to preserve them it would be a very good thing to introduce the Irish system of boycotting, and then he would not kill hares any more. Now, the right hon. Baronet the Member for Essex (Sir H. Selwin-Ibbetson) says he has a farm of 1,600 acres in his own hands, and he makes a good profit.

Sir H. SELWIN-IBBETSON: I must interrupt the right hon. Gentleman when he puts words into my mouth which I never uttered. I imagine that I have more experience of agriculture than the right hon. Gentleman, and I have not experienced the success he seems to anticipate.

Sir W. HARCOURT: Then the right hon. Baronet does not make a profit, and he wants hares in order to make farming profitable. But that was not the point to which my remark was about to be addressed. I was about to say that I cannot understand how a man who farms 1,600 acres cannot have hares if he wants them.

Sir H. SELWIN-IBBETSON: I am sorry to again interrupt the right hon. Gentleman. I have a few hares on my own property, but I spoke in the interest and as the mouthpiece of the farmers of Essex, who at present complain that they have none.

Sir W. HARCOURT: Then the right hon. Baronet has a few hares on his own property, which, no doubt, go for the food of the people. All I can say is that if the farmers of Essex are as anxious to preserve hares as the right hon. Baronet they would have no difficulty any more than he has in preserving them if they chose. I refer to small farmers, and there is one thing which makes small farmers object to this Bill. This Bill introduces a new Game Law on small men's lands, under the pretence or justification of looking after hares in the close time. The gamekeeper will always be upon the ground of the small man. [*Ironical laughter.*] You may laugh, but that is the pith of the whole question, and I venture to say that I know as much about the feeling of these small owners as you do. I know that what they more dislike than anything else is the sort of warrant this Bill will give to the gamekeeper to be always upon their premises to see what they are doing, although the purpose alleged is to see whether or not they are killing hares in close time. The great advantage the small holders received under the Bill of 1880 was that they got rid of the gamekeeper [*Cries of* "No, no," *and* "Pheasants," "Partridges."] Yes, but in many places there was no question of pheasants and partridges. The gamekeeper was always on their land looking after the ground game. This Bill is a warrant to the gamekeeper to be always on their ground, and that is what the small farmers object to. I think you are making a great mistake in this matter. Under this Bill you will have to enforce penalties, and if you enforce penalties against a man for killing a hare on his own land, whether for sale or otherwise, you create an amount of discontent and disturbance in the country, of the consequence of which you can have no conception. I can understand a private Member introducing a Bill of this kind, but I cannot understand the Government taking upon themselves the responsibility of creating a new Game Law. I for one shall do whatever I can to prevent this Bill passing into law.

COLONEL DAWNAY: May I appeal to the Committee to go to a Division at once. It is quite impossible for the promoters of the Bill to accept this Amendment. I feel it would cut the heart out of the Bill. What is the use of a close time if you allow people to kill hares all through the close time?

(4.48.) MR. ESSLEMONT: I think I have received exceedingly little encouragement and very scant justice from the promoters of this Bill. I am desirous that this Bill should pass, in order that poachers and others may not make it a matter of gain to kill hares at a season when hon. Gentlemen wish to preserve hares. But I am desirous, on the other hand, that that should be made possible without outraging the feelings of those people who we ought to respect more than any others. The tenant farmer at present has a proprietary right in these creatures, and you have said that he desires to preserve them. If he desires to preserve them he will preserve them. I deny that farmers will kill hares inhumanly, and I protest most strongly against adopting this reactionary measure, and inventing the new crime suggested. Tenant farmers have enough to do to contend with the agricultural difficulty without being brought within the meshes of the law in regard to the killing of game during a certain season. My hon. Friend (Dr. Farquharson) who represents the Western Division of Aberdeenshire and myself represent 11,000 agricultural holders. There is no scarcity of hares, and these people do not want this Bill. They want to be put on their honour, as the landlord is to take fair care of these creatures in a regular and proper way. We are told there will be no destruction of crops. I am a small farmer, and I could take the President of the Board of Agriculture to a spot where, during the very months you propose to preserve hares, I had an acre and a half of barley eaten up by hares. [MR. CHAPLIN: Rabbits.] No, not rabbits. I have lived as many years amongst farmers as the right hon. Gentleman, and I know the difference between hares and rabbits. Now, it has been proved beyond contradiction that since the passing of the Ground Game Act hares have been cheaper in the market than before, and, therefore, the food of the people is not the question at all. It is said that if we do not pass this Bill farmers will kill hares wantonly and inhumanly. I do not believe it. No such calumny can be hurled against the farming classes. What we want to get at is the poacher, who cares nothing about cruelty or anything else if he can make money out of killing these creatures. If you will not accept this reasonable Amendment, and not allow the farmers to have the proprietary interest in hares that they have now, you will only defeat your Bill. In its present shape the Bill is purely reactionary. It amounts to a breach of the agreement which is working so well between farmers and the proprietors with regard to ground game, and I protest against any one attributing to me any motive other than the most humane in the Amendment I have proposed.

(4.55.) COLONEL DAWNAY: I beg to move that the Question be now put.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think this particular question has been fully discussed, and, therefore, I should have no hesitation in putting the Motion if necessary, but it seems to me undesirable to resort to that procedure when it can be avoided, and I therefore hope the Committee will now agree to divide on the Amendment.

DR. TANNER: The argument advanced——

THE CHAIRMAN: I have pointed out that, if necessary, I would not decline to put the Motion. I think the subject has been adequately discussed, and if hon. Gentlemen continue the discussion, I shall have no option but to put the Motion.

DR. TANNER: I merely rose for the purpose of moving that you report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.

(4.56.) SIR W. HARCOURT: I think we may now fairly go to a Division upon the Amendment. We ought to avoid the use of the Closure as much as we can. Gentlemen opposite would gain nothing by it, because we should have two divisions instead of one.

DR. TANNER: I certainly must protest——

Mr. LAMBERT rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

(5.0.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 231; Noes 101.—(Div. List, No. 157.)

Question put accordingly.

(5.10.) The Committee divided:—Ayes 239; Noes 130.—(Div. List, No. 158.)

*(5.25.) MR. BARCLAY: The object of the Amendment I have on the Paper is to except from punishment under the Act cases in which hares and leverets are killed by accident. We know how the existing Game Laws have boen interpreted by a good many Justices, and I am afraid that as the Act now stands, a farmer might be held responsible if a hare were killed by an agricultural implement such as a mowing machine when at work. I have no fault to find with the administration of the Game Act in Scotland by the Sheriffs' substitutes, but I should like to provide against possibilities such as I have indicated. I hope my hon. Friend will accept the Amendment, and thus save the time of the House.

Amendment proposed, in Clause 2, page 1, line 12, after the word "kill" to insert the word "or."

Question proposed, "That the word 'or' be there inserted."

COLONEL DAWNAY: I accept that Amendment.

Question put, and agreed to.

It being half an hour after Five of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Wednesday next.

SLANDER LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

(No. 278.)

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Wednesday, 9th July.

PAUPER LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND) (OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION) BILL.

(No. 140.)

Bill considered in Committee, and reported.

On the Motion that the Bill be considered as amended this day—

MR. T. M. HEALY: I think it should not be taken until July 2nd. The Bill requires to be reprinted, and I appeal to the Attorney General for Ireland whether it is not a reasonable request, seeing that we have not had an opportunity of considering some of the Amendments?

MR. JOHNSTON: I will put it down for to-morrow, and consult in the meantime with the hon. Member.

MR. MADDEN: I think the request of the hon. and learned Member is reasonable.

MR. CHANCE: My name is on the back of the Bill, and I suggest that it be taken on July 2nd.

*MR. JOHNSTON: Under the circumstances I accept that.

Bill, as amended, to be considered upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 358.]

MARRIAGES IN BRITISH EMBASSIES &c. BILL.—(No. 183.)

Bill considered in Committee, and reported; as amended, to be considered upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 359.]

BOILER EXPLOSIONS ACT (1882) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 339.)

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

ACCUMULATIONS BILL.—(No. 171.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) ACT (1867) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 345.)

Bill read a second time, and committed for Wednesday next.

BARRACKS (CONSOLIDATED FUND) (24th JUNE).

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question (24th June),

> "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the Resolution, 'That it is expedient to authorise the charge on, and issue out of, the Consolidated Fund of any deficiency which there may be in the moneys provided by Parliament for the payment of the principal and interest of any sums borrowed by the Treasury, under the provisions of any Act of the present Session for building and enlarging barracks and camps in the United Kingdom and in certain Colonies.'"

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolution agreed to.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENT ROOMS.

Ordered, That Mr. Sheil be discharged from the Committee.—(*Mr. Richard Power.*)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

On the Motion for Adjournment—

(5.54.) SIR W. HARCOURT: It would be convenient to the House if the Chancellor of the Exchequer will state what will be the first two or three Bills, and their order, on the Paper to-morrow. I presume we are not to take the order as it stands on the Order Book.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): Without stating exactly the order in which they will be taken, we shall take the Allotments Bill, the Barracks Bill, the Western Australia Bill, and the Education Code Bill to-morrow. I think the Allotments Bill will probably be taken first. I may add that we propose to take the Police Superannuation Bill on Friday.

(5.55.) SIR W. HARCOURT: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to mean that the Local Taxation Bill will not be on the Paper to-morrow?

MR. GOSCHEN: No, Sir; it will not, I think, be on the Paper to-morrow. At all events, if it is on the Paper, we do not propose to proceed with it to-morrow.

House adjourned at Five minutes before Six o'clock.

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COMMITTEES
  If there are no other Instructions down besides those which are out of order, and, therefore, no Question before the House, the Speaker technically would have to leave the Chair, without Question put, and allow the proceedings to be completed, as they originated before 12 o'clock *June* 5, 136, 137, 138; *June* 6, 162
  Instructions which might be carried out by Amendments or clauses in Committee are irregular. There is a difference between an Instruction to a Committee and an Amendment on the Second Reading, which traverses the principle of the Bill. When a Bill has been read a second time the House [*cont.*

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  has assented to the principle of the Bill. When the House is ready to go into Committee the Standing Order allows the Speaker to leave the Chair without Question put; but there is a reservation with regard to Instructions to the Committee. If an Instruction moved on that occasion were to traverse the principle of the Bill, that would virtually be a Second Reading Debate. It would be an Amendment to the principle of the Bill, and would therefore reduce to a minimum and nullify altogether the provisions of the Standing Order, that the Speaker leave the Chair without Question put. The precedents have no Instructions which go beyond the machinery necessary to carry out the general purpose and scope of a Bill *June* 9, 347, 348, 350
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